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METRICAL PSALMS

AND

PARAPHRASES

A SHORT SKETCH OF THEIR HISTORY
WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES OF THEIR AUTHORS

BY THE

Rev. THOMAS YOUNG, B.D.

MINISTER OF ELLON

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EDITORS' PREFACE

The success of a similar volume in this series, entitled *Hymns and Hymn Makers*, by the late Rev. Duncan Campbell, B.D., Edinburgh, encourages the Editors to hope that this interesting account of the Metrical Psalms and Paraphrases, which are dear to the hearts of Scottish Christians in all parts of the world, will receive an equally hearty welcome. Mr. Young has spared no pains to obtain accurate information on the historical questions involved, and his treatment of the subject is as full and particular as the limitations of the series would permit.

J. CAMERON LEES.
J. A. M'CLYMONT.

February 1909.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The aim of this work is to trace the historic development of the Scottish Psalms and Paraphrases from their earliest source to their final acceptance for use in public worship. The writer, in doing so, has given, somewhat in detail, extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly and of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in order that the reader may be able to mark the successive steps, and the means employed, in that development. He has also introduced short biographical notes of those who had a chief share in making or shaping the Psalms and Paraphrases, and a number of memorable incidents which illustrate the place and power which the Psalms have had in the life of the people. He has himself found the study most fascinating; and he ventures to hope that what he has written may help to deepen, especially in the hearts and minds of young people, the affection and veneration in which this portion of Scotland's psalmody has so long been held. He cannot claim to have exhausted the subject in all its various departments. Other authors have gone more fully into different portions of it; but he has tried to take a general survey of the whole field, which, so far as he is aware, has not hitherto been done. In the per-

formance of this task he has been greatly indebted to the works of the Rev. Neil Livingston, Dr. David Laing, Rev. J. W. Macmeekan, Douglas J. Maclagan, Rev. Dr. John Ker, Rowland E. Prothero, M.V.O., and, in a less degree, to the writings of many others, who are mentioned at the close of the book. He has also to acknowledge the courtesy of the Librarians of the British Museum, the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. And, finally, he gratefully acknowledges the valuable suggestions and help which he has received, when this book was in manuscript and was passing through the press, from his friend, the Rev. Dr. M'Clymont, Joint-Editor of the Series, and from his brother, the Rev. William Young, B.A., Bramhall, Cheshire.

THOMAS YOUNG.

Manse of Ellon,
February 1909.

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THE METRICAL PSALMS AND PARAPHRASES

BOOK I.—THE PSALMS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION—THE HEBREW PSALTER

The origin of sacred song is lost in the mists of antiquity. Perhaps it was coeval with our race, and was the outcome of an instinctive feeling that singing is a fitting expression of our deepest and holiest emotions. At any rate, it is a universally acknowledged fact that the earliest form of the literature of all nations has been the poetic. It is also certain that the value of vocal music in religious worship has been practically recognised in all ages and in all lands. The Pagan, the Jew, and the Christian have, each and all, as by a natural instinct, given a musical expression to their religious feelings in the adoration, prayer, or praise which they offered to their respective deities. In honour of their gods, the Greeks introduced choral lyrics into their dramas; the Romans sang solemn chants at their religious festivals; and the Hindus still sing their ancient Vedic hymns. But it is to the Jews that we must look for the best and most constant union of religious feeling and lyric verse. The Old Testament contains the finest sacred poetry in

the world. Its oldest piece is that wherein Lamech addressed his two wives, Adah and Zillah. In a later day, Moses struck a grand triumphant note of thankfulness when, on the shore of the Red Sea, in a simple but sublime lyric, he celebrated the discomfiture of the Egyptians; to which Miriam added her response in a jubilant strophe. In the age of the Judges, Deborah sang her splendid war-song, in which were not forgotten the praises of Jehovah. But it was in the time of David, the Poet-King, that this form of sacred literature reached its highest excellence. There is nothing finer in any language than his Lament over the death of Saul and Jonathan.

The psalms of David will remain his outstanding memorial to all generations. Not only did he himself write many psalms, but he also brought all previous religious songs of his nation to what Professor Robertson calls "a definite psalm-type."[1] Hence there is good ground for the ancient and persistent tradition which assigns to him the origin of psalmody. Josephus says: "David . . . composed songs and hymns to God, of several sorts of metre: some of those which he made were *trimeters* and some were *pentameters*."[2] The sacred lyrics which he composed became the earliest part of what is now known as the *Hebrew Psalter*, which is, of course, the source of all our metrical versions. It is, therefore, right that we should say a brief word on this subject.

The Hebrew Psalter.—This Psalter, commonly called "The Psalms of David," is a collection of sacred lyrics designed and suited for use in the worship of God. It does not fall within the scope of the present work to discuss the date and authorship of particular psalms, nor the

[1] *The Poetry and the Religion of the Psalms*, p. 353.
[2] *Antiq.* bk. vii. ch. xii.

time when, nor the person by whom, the collection, as we now have it, was made. But it may be seen by a mere glance at our Revised Version, that the collection is composed of five books, which end respectively with Psalms xli. lxxii. lxxxix. cvi. and cl.; and that each of the first four books ends with a doxology, which has no special connection with the sense of the psalm to which it is attached. The fifth book ends with a psalm which is altogether a doxology. These divisions seem to suggest that the several books were compiled, and added to the collection, at different periods, and that therefore the Psalter as a whole was the growth of many years. In this way it came to reflect the religious and patriotic feelings of the people under varying and far-separated national experiences. But, as David was the largest and most eminent contributor, and was also probably the compiler of the first part of the collection, the book in later days became known as *The Psalms of David.*

The original designation of the book as a whole is now hard to determine. Among the Jews it has long been known as *Book of Praises*, or, in shortened form, simply *Praises.* But it has been conjectured that an earlier name for it was *Prayers*, because it is said at the end of Psalm lxxii., "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." If this was the case, then the word "prayer" must have been understood in its broadest sense as any turning of the heart to God in praise or supplication. It is to the Septuagint that we are indebted for our word *Psalms.* The word is from the Greek ψαλμός, and was the translation of a Hebrew word signifying a rhythmical composition. But the Hebrew word, in the Old Testament, is never used in the plural; and in the superscriptions of even the Davidic psalms it is applied only to some, not to all; probably

to those which had been composed expressly for a musical accompaniment.

But, whilst we cannot determine the original name of the book as a whole, there were special titles given (at what date we cannot say) to particular psalms. Thus, some, as Psalms xxx. xlvi. xlviii., etc. were called a Shir or Song; others, as Psalms xxxii. xlii. xliv., etc. were called a Maschil or Homily; others again, as Psalms vi. lvi. lix. were called a Michtam or Private Memorial; some, as Psalms lx. and lxxx., were called an Eduth or Testimony; and one, Psalm vii., was called a Shiggaion or Irregular Ode. These various titles seem to have referred to the subject-matter of each psalm, or to the manner in which, with or without instrumental accompaniment, it was to be sung. And a study of the Hebrew structure of the psalms shows that they were composed in different metres, according to the poetic note which they expressed. This variety in the rhythm may in some measure be brought out in a prose translation; but it is wholly lost when every psalm is rendered into one uniform metre.

But what is more interesting than its poetic structure is the wonderful fact that this Psalter has stood the test of well-nigh three thousand years, and has become "The devotional handbook of the world." These psalms, or some of them, were sung by the Jews in the sanctuary service before there was a temple: they formed part of the elaborate liturgy of both the first and the second temple: were fondly cherished by the captives of Babylon "in a strange land": cheered the tedium of the way as the exiles travelled back to Palestine: were the inspiring war-songs of the valiant patriots in the brave days of the Maccabees: were sung by the Jewish pilgrims as with joy they climbed the steep rough roads to the City of their Solemnities: and their glad notes of thanksgiving rose to God from the upper

chamber where Christ and His disciples kept the Holy Supper. They still furnish sad strains for those Jews who every Friday lament, in the Wailing-place at Jerusalem, the desolation of their country. In every Jewish synagogue and in every Christian Church throughout all the world they are still read or chanted or sung in Hebrew or Greek or Latin, or in vernacular tongues, in prose or verse. Moreover, saintly souls, in all ages, have found in them spiritual help, and appropriate words wherewith to draw near to God in private worship. And it is a suggestive fact that the Council of Toulouse, which in A.D. 1229 interdicted the Bible to the laity, left them the use of the Psalter.

What a wonderful book is this old Hebrew Psalter! "David," says Lamartine, "is the first of the poets of feeling—the king of lyrists. Never has the thought of poet risen so high and pure. Never has the soul opened before man and God in language so tender, so sympathetic and moving. All the secret cries of the human heart have found a voice through his lips. If we think of the lyric poets of the most cultivated nations of antiquity, singing of wine, love, blood, the victories of mules and horses in the fields of Elis, we are seized with profound astonishment at the mysterious utterances of the shepherd-prophet, who speaks with God as a friend, who praises His wonders, admires His justice, entreats His mercy, and seems to be an anticipating echo of the poetry of the Gospel, repeating the loving words of Christ before he had heard them."

We cannot wonder, therefore, that it has been the long effort and fond ambition of the Christian Church to make this book serviceable to all classes of the people through the medium of the metrical versions in the vernacular tongue.

CHAPTER II

EARLY VERNACULAR PSALTERS

1. General Remarks

Much is always necessarily lost in any translation from one language into another, and this is peculiarly true of any Western translation of Hebrew poetry. The distinguishing feature of that poetry is not rhyme or assonance, but the rhythmical balancing of parts or parallelism of thought. Whilst its parallelisms can in some measure be reproduced in a prose, they are often wholly obscured in a metrical, translation. Hence the highly poetical character of the psalms can, on the whole, be more vividly seen in a prose than in a metrical translation.

But for practical purposes the metrical rendering is found to be the more useful, for the two reasons that it can be more easily remembered, and more easily sung. Hence, wherever it was desired that the people, as a whole, in any country should praise God in sacred song, metrical psalms or hymns were provided for them in their vernacular tongue. In the early Christian Church we have reason to believe "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" were sung. It may be that these words were used in a comprehensive sense as applying to the different kinds of lyrics in the Hebrew Psalter, or it may be they were used as indicating that,

in addition to the Psalter, other sacred songs were already being sung in Christian worship. If the latter, then probably metrical lyrics very early found a place in the Christian Church. But it was not until about the period of the Reformation that **metrical versions of the psalms** began to appear.

Up till that time the worship in the Romish Church had been mainly spectacular in so far as the laity were concerned. They stood or sat afar off in the nave, and looked and listened whilst the gorgeously robed priests performed the ceremony of the Mass, and the finely trained choristers sang the psalms in Latin prose to the exquisite music of the ancient plain-song or Gregorian Chant. And they were further debarred from singing those psalms "with the understanding" owing to the growing ignorance of the Latin language among both the gentry and the common people. After the Reformation, however, all this was changed. The laity were taught that the great Sacrifice had been offered once for all by Christ Himself, who, as their only Priest, had passed within the veil to plead their cause; and that they had themselves been made "priests unto God," to present their own prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks. To enable them intelligently to offer such worship, it became necessary to provide them, not only with the Bible, but also with words of prayer and praise in their vernacular speech. Hence, even where the first words of each psalm in Latin were permitted to remain as a title for the convenient use of the learned, the psalms themselves were rendered in vernacular versions.

It is hard to say when metrical versions of the psalms in the vernacular tongue first came into use. The younger Pliny tells us that the Christians in the beginning of the second century sang hymns to Christ as to God,

but there is no record or tradition of their having used any metrical version of the psalms. The Lollards, the followers of Wyclif in the fourteenth century, got the name from a Latinised form of the old Dutch word *Lollaerd*, which literally means "a singer of psalms"; but, whilst it is known that they did sing hymns and psalms in public and private worship, there is no hint that they turned the psalms into metrical form. And the same may be said of their fellow-disciples, the Hussites, in Bohemia. The practice, however, of these precursors of the Reformation, as well as that of the Waldensian community, undoubtedly prepared the way for the metrical psalmody of a later age. The metrical version of the psalms in the vernacular may, therefore, be said to be the offspring of the Reformation. And thus there was restored to the people the "long-lost privilege of **praising God in His Sanctuary**."

Although Luther himself produced no distinct psalter, yet as early as 1524 he stated what it was he intended to do:—

> We intend, according to the example of the prophets and ancient fathers of the Church, to make psalms or spiritual songs for the common people, that the word of God may continue among the people, if not otherwise, yet surely in the psalms. . . . The verse to fit the humblest capacity.

Luther carried out this intention when he interspersed a few psalms in his book of hymns. He may therefore be said to have given the first great impulse to the cause of metrical psalmody. His example was soon followed by others in England, Scotland, France and elsewhere. We proceed to give some account of their labours in order to show historically how our present authorised version of the psalms was developed.

2. Coverdale's Psalms

Miles Coverdale was born in Yorkshire in 1488, and died in London in 1568. He was the famous translator of the Bible into English; and his prose translation of the psalms is that which is still to be found in the English Book of Common Prayer. He was also the author of a book of praise, entitled *Goostly Psalmes and Spiritual Songs*, which contained thirteen of the former and twenty-six of the latter; and these metrical compositions were "set to Gregorian Tones and German Chorals, including the famous Ein Feste Burg."[1] In writing them his aim was to displace unclean and otherwise objectionable songs; so he exclaims: "Would that our minstrels had none other thing to play upon, neither our carters and ploughmen other thing to whistle upon, save Psalms, Hymns and such godly songs as David is occupied withal. And if women sitting at their rocks or spinning at the wheels, had none other songs to pass their time withal . . . they should be better occupied than with *hey nony nony*, *hey troly loly*, and such like fantasies." The date of his book is uncertain, but it must have been published before 1539; for in that year it was adjudged to be heretical, and was condemned to the flames. It had, however, "served its generation," for it helped forward the cause of the Reformation. The same may be also said of what appeared in Scotland about the same time, viz. :—

3. Wedderburn's Psalms

These were otherwise known as "The Dundie Psalms." Calderwood the historian gives an account of three gifted brothers, of the name of Wedderburn, who lived in Dundee, and who about 1540 published a book entitled, *Ane Compendious Booke of Godly and Spiritual Songs*, which

[1] Livingstone, p. 9.

is commonly known as *The Gude and Godlie Ballates*. The eldest, James, "had a good gift of poesie and made diverse comedies and tragedies in the Scottish tongue, wherein he nipped the abusses and superstitioun of the time." But his temerity in thus exposing the corrupt lives of the priests cost him a lifelong exile from his native land. He escaped to Dieppe, where he lived in prosperity as a merchant, and died in peace. The youngest brother, Robert, was admitted to priest's orders in Dundee. He also, at least during the lifetime of Cardinal Beaton, had to seek refuge in a foreign land. But he returned, and after his second brother's death he superintended the editing of the *Gude and Godlie Ballates*, and took great pains "to provide, for the various metres, pleasant and appropriate tunes."[1] It was this second brother, John, who seems to have composed the psalms. He too, having been persuaded against his will, became a priest in Dundee. "But soon after," as Calderwood says, "he began to profess the reformed religioun." "Being summoned, he departed to Almaine (Germany), where he heard Luther and Melancton, and became verie fervent and zealous. He translated manie of Luther's dytements into Scotish meeter; and the Psalmes of David. He turned manie bawdie songs and rymes in Godlie rymes. He returned after the death of the King, in December 1542, but was again persued by the Cardinall, and fled to England."

In Germany Wedderburn had come under the same influences as Coverdale, and the psalms of both of them show that they had been drinking at the same Lutheran fountain. The similarity of the thought in their translation and of the style in their versification may be seen from their renderings of Psalms lxvii. and cxxx., the first verse of which in each case we give :—

[1] Mackmeekan, p. xix.

COVERDALE (*Psalm* lxvii.)

God be mercifull to us,
And send over us his blessynge:
Shew us his presence glorious,
And be ever to us lovynge;
That men on earth may know thy way,
Thy saving health and righteousnesse:
That they be not led by nyght nor day,
Throw the pretexte of trew justice
To seek salvacyon wher none is.

WEDDERBURN

O God be mercyfull to us,
And send to us thy blissing:
Thy face schaw us sa glorious,
And be ever to us luiffing;
That men on eird may knaw thy way,
Thy saving heill and richteousness,
That they be nocht led nicht nor day
Fra thy preceptis, and trew justice,
To seik salvatioun quhair nane is.

COVERDALE (*Psalm* cxxx.)

Out of the depe cry I to thee
O Lorde, Lorde, hear my callynge:
O let thyne eares enclyned be
To the voyce of my complaynynge.
If thou, Lorde, wilt deal with straitnesse,
To marke all that is done amysse,
Lorde, who may abyde thy reckonynge?

WEDDERBURN

Fra deip, O Lord, I call on thee,
Lord, hear my invocation;
Thy eiris thow inclyne to me
And heir my lamentatioun:
For gif thow will our sin impute
Till us, O Lord, that we commit,
Quha may abyde thy accusatioun?

It is hard to say which wrote in imitation of the other, or whether (as is most likely) they both wrote in imitation of a common master in Germany.

The Psalms in this book, as noted by Professor Mitchell, are twenty-two;[1] and he says that there are stanzas in some of them, particularly in Nos. xxiii. cxxiv. and cxxx., which deserve to live (*Gude and Godlie Ballates*, Introduction, p. 53). These psalms were interspersed with a number of hymns, and both psalms and hymns were set to popular tunes with the avowed aim of "changing many of the old Popish songs unto godlike purposes." It is not likely that these "Dundie Psalms" ever received ecclesiastical sanction or were used as Church songs. But it is most probable that they were sung, not only by individuals, but also by families, in the worship of God. Thus James Melville, in speaking of them, says: "Whereof I learned diverse *par ceur* with great diversitie of toones." And John Knox, in his *History of the Reformation*,[2] tells of George Wishart the martyr, that, in the evening preceding his apprehension at Ormiston, "after supper, he held a comfortable purpose of the death of God's chosen children, and merrily said, 'Methinks that I desire earnestly to sleep,' and 'Will we sing a Psalm?' So he appointed the fifty-first psalm, which began thus in Scottish metre, 'Have mercy on me, now, good Lord.'" It is evident that this was chosen from Wedderburn's Collection, for it occurs as the second verse of his rendering of the psalm, and occurs nowhere else. The whole verse is:—

Haif mercy on me, O gude Lord,
Efter thy greit mercie;

[1] These are Nos. ii. xii. xiii. xv. xxiii. xxxi. xxxiii. xxxvii. li. lxiv. lxvii. lxxiii. lxxix. lxxxiii. xci. cxiv. cxv. cxxiv. cxxviii. cxxx. cxxxvii. cxlv.

[2] Bk. i. p. 59, Lord Guthrie's edition.

My sinfull life dois me remord,
Quhilk sair hes grevit Thee.
But thy greit grace has me restord
Through Christ to libertie.

It is probable that these psalms were known also to another Scottish martyr, Adam Wallace, who was burnt at the stake on Castle Hill, Edinburgh, in 1550, and that it was in reference to his using them that Foxe says: "He passed ouer that night in singing and lauding God to the eares of divers hearers, having learned the Psalter of David without booke to his consolation." But indeed they must have become very generally known in Scotland, for editions of them continued to be issued up till, at least, the year 1600, and must have exercised a deep and lasting influence on the people. They supplied elements which were not to be found in the satirical and destructive poems of Sir David Lyndsay and George Buchanan, and contributed much to the forward march of the Scottish Reformation.

Wedderburn's rendering of the 23rd Psalm, of which Professor Mitchell has written with appreciation, is our earliest vernacular metrical version of it, and may therefore be read with interest:—

The Lord God is my Pastour gude,
Abundantly mee for to feid:
Then how can I be destitute
Of any gude thing in my neid?
Hee feid mee in feildes faire,
To rivers sweit, pure and preclair,
He dryues me bot ony dreid.

My saull and lyfe hee dois refresh,
And me convoyes in the way
Of his justice and righteousnesse,
And mee defendes from decay.
Not for my warkes vertousnesse,
But for his name so glorious
Preserues mee baith night and day.

And though I wander, and goe will,
Or am in danger for to die,
No dried of deid sall come mee till,
Nor feare of cruell tyrannie ;
Because that thou art me beside,
To gouerne me and bee my gyde
From all mischiefe and miserie.

Thy staffe whereof I stand great aw,
And thy schiep huke me for tae fang ;
They nurture mee my faults to knaw,
When fra the hie way I gae wrang ;
Therefore my sperit is blyth and glad,
When on my flesh thy scourge is laid,
In the right way to gar me gang.

And thou ane tabill does prouyde
Before mee, full of all delyte,
Contrair to my perseuars pryde,
To their displeasure and dispyte.
Thou hes annoynted my head,
And full my cup thou hes made,
With many dishes of delyte.

Thy gudnesse and benignity,
Let euer bee with mee therefore ;
And while I live, untill I die,
Thou lay them up with mee in store :
That I may have my dwelling place
Into thy house, before thy face,
To sing with thee for evermore.

4. The French Psalter

This was the earliest of all the **complete** metrical versions of the psalms in the vernacular tongue, and was associated with the names of Clement Marot and Theodore de Beze. Marot was born at Cahors about 1496. He became a distinguished French poet, with "a witty pen and satiric turn," which he used in scourging the errors and vices of his age. His sympathies were with the Reformation. He held a high place in the Court of

Francis I.; but this did not protect him from persecution on account of his heresy, and he had to flee for refuge, first to the Queen of Navarre, and afterwards to the Duchess of Ferrara. In 1536 he was permitted to return to Paris, where, encouraged by the King, he continued what he had begun some time before, a metrical translation of the psalms. The portion which was then ready he published in 1538; but, on its being pronounced heretical by the Sorbonne, he had again to flee—this time to Geneva, in 1543, where he made the acquaintance of Calvin. Thence he went on to Turin, where he died in 1544. It was some time after his death before the French Psalter was completed. It became known by his name, although only fifty of the psalms were translated by him. Two were translated by Calvin, and the rest by Beza.

Theodore de Beze, whose name is commonly Latinised as Beza, was born of a good old Burgundian family in 1519. In his earlier years he indulged in fashionable dissipations, and he was known as a writer of witty and elegant, but sometimes indecent verses. A serious illness, however, in 1548 led to a great spiritual change in his life, and thereafter he consecrated his pen to sacred uses. As a man of letters he occupied himself principally with theological controversy, but also with the completion of this metrical version of the psalms. He was a man of high spirits notwithstanding his religious earnestness, and became very popular among his fellow-citizens at Geneva. The government of Geneva had been a kind of theocracy, with Calvin as its president, and on his death in 1564 Beza succeeded to the position, which he filled with eminent success. But it needed all his wisdom and influence to guide Geneva through the difficulties arising from a terrible plague, the large influx of fugitives from France after the St. Bar-

tholomew Massacre, and the long war with Savoy. It was in connection with an event in this war that he made his last public appearance. On hearing one morning of the failure of the assault on the city by the famous "Escalade" in 1602, Beza, now an old man who had previously retired from the active duties of the pastorate, rose from bed, dressed himself and went down to the Cathedral of St. Pierre, where he mounted the pulpit stairs and called upon the congregation to sing the 124th Psalm, which begins, "If the Lord had not been on our side." After this incident he lingered a few years longer, often saying, in the words of Augustine, "Long have I lived; long have I sinned. Blessed be the name of the Lord." He died in 1605, at the age of eighty-six. The greater number of the psalms in this collection were metrically translated by him at the request of Calvin, and so to Beza belongs a chief share in its fame.

But although Marot and Beza were the chief authors of the French Psalter, it owed much to the counsel and inspiration of Calvin. Indeed, it is to him that is principally due the large place which the singing of psalms came to have, not only in Geneva, but also in all the Reformed Churches. His views on the subject are given in his famous *Institutio* published in 1536:—

> If the singing come not from the heart it is worth nothing, and can only awaken God's wrath. Singing in itself is good and useful; our tongues must praise God, and as we honour Him by a common faith, we must also unite in glorifying Him before men that they may hear our confession of His name and be inspired with the desire of following our example. Singing in the church has been practised from the earliest times; the Apostle Paul recommended the use of spiritual songs. But neither the ear nor the spirit must be distracted. Augustine remarks that he preferred the style recommended by Athanasius, which was rather

speaking than singing; but the latter awakened feelings in the highest degree edifying to his soul. With proper moderation, therefore, the use of singing is holy and useful. Those melodies which are introduced merely to give pleasure are not agreeable to the majesty of the Church, and must be infinitely displeasing to God.—*Instit.* Lib. iii. c. 20, sec. 31, 32.

In a lengthy but notable preface, which Calvin wrote for the Genevan edition of 1543, he set forth his views not only as to the usefulness of metrical psalms, but also as to the character of the tunes to which they should be sung. "It should always be seen to," said he, "that the song should not be light and frivolous, but that it have weight and majesty." His "musical sensibility" being grieved to hear some psalms sung to light tunes with profane associations, he applied to the first musicians in Europe to furnish him with tunes worthy of the sacred words. So to him also, in this way, we owe some of those fine, melodious and stately tunes in that French Psalter which are still in use among ourselves—one of them being the "Old Hundred."

The French Psalter, almost immediately on its publication, gained what proved to be a wide and lasting popularity on account of the excellence of its translations, the variety of its rhythm, and the beauty of its melodies. "It is highly characteristic of the spirit of the age in which the psalms appeared," says Dr. Henry, "that they were sung with success at the court of Francis I., and later at that of Francis II., and the formidable Catherine. Every one at the court had his favourite psalm, which he sung in the style most pleasing to himself. Catherine of Medicis herself followed this custom. King Henri II. sang, while hunting, the psalm, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks,' and the King of Navarre, 'Lord, avenge me,' etc. The Sorbonne sought in vain to persuade Francis to suppress the translation. Even in

Paris the congregational singing of psalms produced the deepest impression upon the people when first made acquainted with the earnest, solemn melodies to which the sacred words were set."[1]

This French Psalter has had a long and honourable history, and has many cherished associations with the martyrs of France. It is still used where French-speaking people sing a metrical version of the psalms. It exercised a marked influence on our Old Scottish Psalter of 1565.

5. The Old English Psalter

We have named it "Old" because after the end of the seventeenth century it came to be known in England as "The Old Version." Its growth was gradual, extending over a period of fourteen years, viz. from 1548 till 1562. It was the product of several authors, although it was chiefly associated with the names of **Sternhold and Hopkins.** It was begun by the former, and appeared probably in 1548, with this title :—

Certayne Psalmes chose out of the Psalter of David, and drawen into English metre, by Thomas Sternhold grome of ye Kynges Maiesties roobes—Excudebat Londini Edvardus Whitchurche.

The volume was dedicated to Edward VI., and contained only nineteen psalms, which were Psalms i. ii. iii. iv. v. xx. xxv. xxvii. xxix. xxxii. xxxiii. xli. xlix. lxxiii. lxxviii. ciii. cxx. cxxii. cxxxviii. In the year 1549—the year in which Sternhold died—there appeared a slightly enlarged edition, containing forty-four psalms, and entitled :—

Al Suche Psalmes of David as Thomas Sternholde late grome of ye Kynges Robes didde in hys lyfe tyme draw into English metre.

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[1] Henry's *Life and Times of John Calvin*, vol. i. pp. 414, 415.

In the body of the book, at the end of the first thirty-seven psalms, there are the words, "Finis. Here end the psalmes drawn into Englisshe metre by M. Sternhold," and before the remaining seven there is a preface by John Hopkins announcing that these had been translated by himself. Various editions of this collection, all nearly the same, continued to be published, until its place was taken by another and further enlarged edition, which appeared in 1556 with this title :—

One and Fiftie Psalmes of David in Englishe metre, whereof 37 were made by Thomas Sternholde : and the rest by others, etc.

In addition to those by Sternhold, it contained seven by Hopkins and seven by one whose initials were W. W. —supposed to stand for William Whittingham.[1] This Psalter formed part of the book published in the same year at Geneva which the English-speaking exiles there used in public worship, and which contained also the Form of Prayers, Confession of Faith, Order of Discipline, Calvin's Catechism, etc. In 1560 there was published in England a still further enlarged edition, containing sixty-five psalms, along with the *Benedictus*, *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in metre, the Commandments, "with an addition," the Lord's Prayer, and "the XII Articles of the Christian faythe." In 1561 there was published at Geneva a still incomplete but yet further enlarged edition, with this title, "Fourscore and seven Psalmes, by Thomas Sternholde and others; together with the Song of Simeon, the Ten Commandments," etc. It was only in 1563 that there at length appeared, with royal sanction, the complete Psalter, with the following title :—

The whole Boke of Psalmes, collected into English metre by

[1] For Whittingham's rendering of Psalm xxiii., as in this edition, see p. 34.

Thomas Starnhold, I. Hopkins, and others; conferred with the Ebrue, with apt notes to synge them withall. Faithfully perused and alowed according to the order appoynted in the Queenes Maiesties Iniunetions. . . . Imprinted at London by John Day, dwelling over Aldersgate, be nethe Saint Martyns. *Cum gratia privilegio Regiae Maiestatis perseptennium.* An 1563.

In the same year, and again in 1565, Day published another edition in four volumes with music, in parts, with this title :—

The whole Psalmes in fourt partes (Tenor, Contra Tenor, Medius and Bassus), which may be song to all musical instruments, set forth for the encrease of vertue, and abolyshing of other vague and triflying ballades.

This, then, was the metrical version of the psalms which the Church of England adopted, and of which more than "309 distinct issues" came from the press before the year 1700, when it began to give place to the more recent version of Tate and Brady.[1] On this Old English Psalter, modelled largely after the character of the French Psalter, whose rich diversity of metres it imitated, the criticism has been passed, that its renderings of the psalms are very unequal, that some of them are poor and disjointed, while others possess a dignity which has seldom been equalled. Our chief interest in it lies in the two facts that it became the basis, and furnished most of the materials, for our Old Scottish Psalter of 1565, and that Psalms c. and cxxiv. have found an impregnable place, as alternative versions, in our modern Psalter.

[1] *A New Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the Tunes used in Churches.* By N. Tate and N. Brady. London: 1696. Dedicated to William III.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD SCOTTISH PSALTER OF 1565

1. General Remarks

It is to be observed that the version of *Sternhold and Hopkins*, in its completed form, was issued by "the order appointed" of Queen Elizabeth; but that her royal prerogative, of course, did not extend to Scotland. The Scots had ever been jealous lest in things civil or ecclesiastical they should be regarded as subordinate to England. And even in the matter of their psalmody they showed their "spiritual independence." They did not accept unquestioningly what was "made in England." Part of the Sternhold and Hopkins version had been published in Geneva in 1556, and this incomplete edition had been used there by the congregation of English-speaking Protestant refugees to whom John Knox was ministering. Through the influence of his name, and also owing to the similarity of religious sentiment which prevailed between the Genevan and the Scottish Protestants, that version seems early to have found its way into at least some parts of Scotland. And it is supposed that it was from this book that, on the memorable day in 1558 when what is known as "The Tragedy of St. Giles" took place in Edinburgh — *i.e.* the open insult offered to the image of that saint and the cowardly flight of the parading priests—"the brethren

assembled themselves in such sort in companyes, synging psalmes and praising God, that the proudast of the ennemies war astonied" (Knox's *Hist.*). As this incomplete Genevan Psalter, which was part of Sternhold and Hopkins' version, contained also what may be called an authoritative Directory for public worship, we may say of it that it forms the starting-point in the history of Scottish Psalmody considered as a matter of ecclesiastical order.

John Knox returned in 1559 to take up his Reformation work in Scotland. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, whose first meeting was held in 1560, early addressed itself to the question of psalmody, but it is not known at what precise date; for its original Acts and Proceedings have not been preserved. We know, however, that it appointed some of its own number, among whom were John Craig and Robert Pont, to revise and prepare for the press a Scottish edition based on that of the Old English Psalter, and that, on their report, it approved of their work; for subsequently, Calderwood the historian made these statements:—

> In the Generall Assemblie conveened at Edinburgh in December 1562 for printing of the psalmes, the kirk lent Robert Licprivick, printer, twa hundreth punds to help to buy irons, ink, and paper, and to fie craftsmen for printing.
>
> In the Generall Assemblie holden at Edinburgh in December 1564 it was ordeaned that everie Minister, Exhorter, and Reader, shall have one of the psalme books printed in Edinburgh, and shall use the order therein conteaned in Marriage, Ministration of the Sacraments, etc.

The edition to which this injunction referred had no separate title-page to the Psalms, but had this comprehensive title:—

> The Forme of Prayer and Ministration of the Sacraments, etc., used in the English Church at Geneva, approved and receaved by

the Church of Scotland whereunto besydes that was in the former bokes, are also added sundrie othèr prayers, with the whole Psalmes of David in English meter. The contents of this boke are conteined in the page following. 1 Corinth. iii. No man can lay any other foundation, than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus. Printed at Edinburgh By Robert Leprevik, MDLXV.

This then was the **Old Scottish Psalter** whose official life lasted from 1565 till 1650. The process of printing it was probably completed previous to the General Assembly of December 1564, when formal sanction for its use was given. It then took the authorised place of "former bokes"—those compiled by the Genevan exiles. An edition, bearing the date 1564, issued by the same printer and similar in all respects to the one of 1565, was the earliest edition of the metrical psalms *printed for the use of the Kirk of Scotland*, that is known to exist. It is a book of extreme rarity. Comparing the variations between the Old English and the Old Scottish Psalters, Livingstone makes these careful observations :—

The differences between the English and Scottish Psalters in regard to the rendering of entire psalms, if viewed in the order of time, are as follows : 1. Both retained the 44 psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins of 1549. 2. Of the 43 added by the Genevan exiles, the English retained 20, and the Scottish the whole. 3. The English added 87, including one second version, in 1562 ; and, of these, 42 were transferred to the Scottish. 4. In 1564 the Scottish was completed by the addition of 21 from new sources. 5. In 1563 and 1565, 4 second versions were added to the English. The versions thus came to differ in 41 instances, besides which the English contained 5 duplicates, not in the Scottish.

But there were also other differences of a minor nature. A number of the psalms, common to the two books, underwent considerable modification at the hands of the Scottish compilers, who sought to make their Psalter as perfect as possible. Moreover, in the matter of versification, there was much greater variety of metre.

The English Psalter had 132 psalms in Common, 4 in Short, 2 in Long, and 12 in Peculiar Metres. But the Scottish Psalter had 99 in Common, 5 in Short, 11 in Long, and 35 in twenty-seven different varieties of Peculiar Metre ; and it is worthy of note that more than half of the specimens of these diversified metres were imitations of those found in the French Psalter.

2. Its Makers

Since 109 of the psalms were common to both the Old English and the Old Scottish Psalter, we must include the **Makers** of the former among those of the latter. They were eight in all—five of them were Englishmen and three were Scotsmen by birth. Sternhold and Hopkins were the chief composers of the English Psalter, and the unnamed "others" who had a share in it were Kethe, Whittingham, Pullain, and Norton. Pont and Craig contributed psalms only to the Scottish Psalters.

Thomas Sternhold.—He was born in 1500. The place of his birth is doubtful, but it was either in Gloucestershire or Hampshire. He was Groom of the Robes to Henry VIII. and Edward VI. To the latter monarch he dedicated his first small volume of Nineteen Psalms. He died in 1549. He is credited with the authorship of thirty-nine psalms in the Old Scottish Psalter. These were Psalms i.-xxii. xxv. xxviii. xxxii. xxxiv. xli. xliii. xliv. xlix. lxiii. lxviii. lxxiii. lxxviii. ciii. cxx. cxxiii. cxxviii. All of these were in the Common Metre except Psalm xxv., which was Short Metre, and Psalm cxx., which was Peculiar Metre.

John Hopkins.—The date of his birth is uncertain, but he was born probably at Awre in Gloucestershire. Very little is known about him except that he was a clergyman and schoolmaster in Suffolk. He seems to have become an exile during the reign of Queen Mary,

but his place of refuge is not mentioned. He returned, however, to England, and in 1570 he died, as rector of Great Waldingfield, Suffolk. His contributions to the books were thirty-seven psalms. These were Psalms xxvi. xxx. xxxi. xxxiii. xxxv. xxxviii. xxxix. xl. xlii. xlv. xlvi. xlviii. lii. lv. lx. lxi. lxiv. lxv. lxvi. lxix. lxxii. lxxiv. lxxvii. lxxix. lxxxii. lxxxiv. lxxxvi. lxxxvii. lxxxix. xcii. xciii. xcv. xcix. and cxlvi. All of these were in the Common Metre except Psalm xlv. It has been said of his psalms and those of Sternhold: "They are very faithful, but somewhat coarse and homely in phraseology." As Fuller well said, "their authors' piety was better than their poetry, and they had drunk more of Jordan than of Helicon."

William Kethe. — He is supposed to have been a native of Scotland, but the dates of his birth and death are unknown. He also had to leave England during the reign of Queen Mary. He joined the exiles at Geneva in 1556. Whilst there he was one of the translators of the Genevan Bible, and was also engaged with others in the metrical translation of the psalms. Lord Wharton called him "a no unready rymer." He wrote some popular religious ballads, the most noted of which was "A Ballad on the whore of Babylon, called *Tye thy Mare Tom Boy.*" On his return to England in 1563 he became Chaplain to the Forces under the Earl of Warwick, and was praised for his courage, steadfastness and laboriousness. He appears to have been in this capacity with the army in Newhaven, and also in "the North parts." He became a settled minister at Child-Ockford in Dorsetshire. It was in 1558 that there was first published, on a page attached to a tract by John Knox, his rendering of Psalm xciv., which began thus :—

O Lord, since vengeance doth to Thee,
And to none else belong :
Now show Thy self, O Lord our God,
With speed avenge our wrong.

But Kethe's best and most enduring memorial is his rendering of Psalm c., which we still sing. He contributed twenty-five psalms to the Psalter. These were Psalms xxvii. xxxvi. xlvii. liv. lviii. lxii. lxx. lxxxv. lxxxviii. xc. xci. xciv. c. ci. civ. cvii. cxi. cxii. cxiii. cxxii. cxxv. cxxvi. cxxxiv. cxxxviii. cxlii. They were notable for the easy flow and variety of their metres, and must have given brightness to the congregational singing.

William Whittingham.—He was born in the county of Chester in 1524, and was educated at Oxford. He had a high repute for learning and intellectual ability; and he also, during his residence among the English exiles at Geneva, was one of the translators of the Genevan Bible. He married whilst there the sister of Calvin, and became the successor of Knox as pastor of the congregation. He returned to England in 1560, and afterwards was in France for three years with the Earls of Bedford and Warwick. Subsequently, through the influence of the latter, he was made Dean of Durham, although he still adhered to his Puritan views. He has been charged with certain acts of vandalism when Dean, but it is admitted that he was well skilled in sacred music, and that the choir of his church at Durham was provided with the best anthems. He died in 1579. He contributed sixteen psalms to the Psalter. These were Psalms xxiii. xxxvii. l. li. lxvii. lxxi. cxiv. cxv. cxix. cxxi. cxxiv. cxxvii. cxxix. cxxx. cxxxiii. and cxxxvii. They were written in a great variety of metres. A very small portion of his rendering of Psalm xxiii. survives, and the whole of his rendering of Psalm cxxiv. (in the same measure as that of Beza), but with some alterations, likewise survives as "Another of the same," in our Modern Psalter.

John Pullain.—He was born in Yorkshire, and was admitted as a senior student of Christ Church in 1547, at the age of thirty. He embraced the Reformation doctrines

and preached them privately at St. Michael's, Cornhill, in 1556. But he also had to flee from England, and he likewise joined the exiles at Geneva. In the happier time of Queen Elizabeth's reign he returned and was made Archdeacon of Colchester. It is said of him that he was opposed to the use of organs in public worship, and was in favour of insisting "that the psalms at common prayer be sung distinctly by the whole congregation." He died in 1565. He contributed only two psalms to the Scottish Psalter. These were Psalms cxlviii. and cxlix.—the former being written in the same measure as still survives in our "Another of the same"; and the latter also being in Peculiar Metre.

Thomas Norton. — He was born in Bedfordshire, and became a Barrister-at-Law. The dates of his birth and death are unknown. Some called him a "forward and busy Calvinist." He wrote several tracts on the religious controversies of the age. He is said to have enjoyed in his day a considerable poetical reputation. Only eight out of the twenty-six psalms which he contributed to the Old English Psalter found a place in the Old Scottish Psalter. These were, Psalms liii. cvi. cix. cxvi. cxxxix. cxliv. cxlvii. and cl. But there were also two other psalms, viz. Psalms cxxxi. and cxxxv., which appeared with the initial letter **M.** Some think the **M** was a mistake for **N.** In that case he should be credited also with these two psalms. But it is more likely that the **M** stood for a person named Marckant.

Robert Pont. — He was born about the year 1527 at Culross, Perthshire. He entered as a student at St. Leonard's College in St. Andrews in 1543. There he prosecuted the study of Philosophy and Divinity with great success. He was an elder in the church at St. Andrews from an early period and, as such, he was a member of the first General Assembly in 1560.

In recognition of his learning and piety he was declared by the Assembly to be qualified for the ministry. He was a man of eminent attainments and of superior business talents. He was therefore called to fill several important offices. In 1563 he was a candidate for the position of Superintendent of the diocese of Galloway. He failed to secure it, but was soon afterwards appointed Commissioner of the diocese of Moray. In 1571 he was appointed to the provostry of Trinity College, and to the vicarage of St. Cuthbert's, both in Edinburgh; and in 1572 he was, by the special permission of the General Assembly, allowed to hold also the office of senator of the College of Justice. In 1574 he became one of the collegiate ministers of St. Cuthbert's. He was a staunch defender of the rights and liberties of the Church; and, on this account, he was in 1584 deprived of his seat in the College of Justice. He deemed it prudent to flee for a time from Scotland, but returned in 1587, and thereafter continued to take an active part in ecclesiastical affairs and literary pursuits. He died on May 8, 1608, and was buried in the church of St. Cuthbert's. His poetical gifts were recognised by the General Assembly, which in May 1601 appointed that he should "revise the psalms; and that his labours sould be revised the next Assemblie." But there is no further mention of such a revisal. He contributed six psalms to the Psalter. These were Psalms lvii. lix. lxxvi. lxxx. lxxxi. and lxxxiii., and they were written in five different metres.

John Craig. — He was born in Scotland in 1512. In the following year he lost his father on "the fatal field of Flodden." Notwithstanding this misfortune, he received a good education at St. Andrews, and went into England to become tutor to the children of Lord Dacre. On war arising between England and Scotland

he returned to his native country, and became a monk of the Dominican Order. He fell under the suspicion of heresy, and was cast into prison. On regaining his liberty he returned to England, and afterwards he went to France and on to Rome. There, through the influence of Cardinal Pole, he obtained an appointment to teach the novices in the cloister of the Dominicans at Bologna. Happening in his studies to read the *Institutio* of Calvin, he became tainted with the "Protestant heresy," and, having a conscientious regard to the text in which Christ forbids His disciples to deny Him before men, he made no secret of his change of sentiments. He was therefore sent to Rome, thrown into prison, tried and condemned to be burnt. But he was saved from this fate by an eventful providence. "Pope Paul IV. having died on the day before his intended execution, the people rose tumultuously, dragged the statue of the deceased pope through the streets, and, breaking open all the prisons, set the prisoners at liberty. Craig immediately left the city; and, as he was walking through the suburbs, he met a company of banditti. One of these men, taking him aside, asked if he had ever been in Bologna. On his answering in the affirmative, the man inquired if he recollected, as he was one day walking in the fields with some young noblemen, having administered relief to a poor maimed soldier who asked him for alms. Craig replied that he had no recollection of such an event. But in this case the obliged party had the better memory. The bandit told him that he could never forget the kindness he had received on that occasion, which he would now beg to repay by administering to the present necessities of his benefactor. In short, this man gave Craig a sufficient sum to carry him to Bologna."

[1] Chambers's *Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, vol. i. p. 55.

Arrived there, he found it prudent to slip away as quietly as possible, and by unfrequented roads, to Milan. "One day, when his money and strength were alike exhausted by the journey, he came to a desert place where, throwing himself down upon the ground, he almost resigned all hope of life. At this moment a dog came fawning up to him with a bag of money in its mouth, which it laid down at his feet. The forlorn traveller instantly recognised this as a special token of God's favour, and picking up fresh energy, proceeded on his way till he came to a little village, where he obtaind some refreshment." He then went on to Vienna, where he became a preacher and favourite at the court of the Emperor Maximilian II. On his fame reaching Rome Pope Pius III. requested that he should be sent back there, as one who had been condemned for heresy. But the Emperor gave him a safe-conduct out of Germany, and he came to England about 1560. Hearing of the Reformation that had taken place in his native country, he returned to Scotland, and offered his services to the Church. He had been absent for twenty-four years, and had almost forgotten his mother-tongue. In 1563 he became, and for nine years continued to be, the colleague of John Knox. In 1567 he incurred the censure of the Privy Council for making a strong protest against the marriage, at the time of the proclamation of banns, between Queen Mary and Bothwell. In 1572 he was set aside by the General Assembly "for the illuminating the north," and, after having been two years in Montrose, "he was sent to Aberdeen, to illuminate these dark places in Mar, Buchan, and Aberdeen, and to teach the youth in the College there." In 1579 he returned to Edinburgh as chaplain to James VI. Thereafter he took a leading part in the affairs of the Church, and had a share with Melville in compiling the Second Book of Discipline. He was also

the author of a confession of faith or covenant condemnatory of all the most obnoxious tenets of the Romish religion, which was "subscribed by the king's majesty and his household" at Edinburgh on January 28, 1580, and subsequently by persons of all ranks throughout the kingdom. It was commonly called the "King's Confession," to distinguish it from Knox's Confession of 1560, and was ultimately adopted as the first part of the National Covenant of 1638. In 1595, feeling the infirmities of age, Craig resigned his place in the royal household and retired from public life. He died on December 4, 1600, aged eighty-eight. Fifteen psalms —viz. Psalms xxiv. lvi. lxxv. cii. cv. cviii. cx. cxvii. cxviii. cxxxii. cxxxvi. cxl. cxli. cxliii. and cxlv.—appeared with the initials I. C., and no one now hesitates in ascribing their authorship to John Craig. These, too, are rich in their variety of metres.

It is worthy of notice that all these eight gifted men suffered more or less in the cause of the Protestant faith. And in their sufferings they turned for comfort and encouragement to the psalms, which seemed (in the words of St. Ambrose) "as if they had been indeed expressly indited for them." With peculiar zest, therefore, they set themselves to translate these inspiring and comforting psalms into metrical form in the vernacular, that all the people might be able, amid their private or national joys and sorrows, to use them in the worship of their God and Saviour. May it not be, even in regard to these metrical translations, that—

> The anguish of the singer made the sweetness of the strain.

3. Illustrative Incidents and Specimens

It is remarkable, on how many historic occasions, some portions of the Old Scottish Psalter were used as an expression of faith in God, or as a medium for the

praise of His great and glorious name. We give a few of the more striking incidents and, at the same time, a few specimens of the psalms.

The Psalms as a whole.—The Psalter was in the hands of the Scottish Covenanting Army when encamped at Duns Law under General Leslie in 1639; and from it the soldiers sang on the occasion to which Baillie refers, when he says:—

> Had ye lent your eare in the morning, and especiallie at even, and heard in the tents the sound of some singing psalms, some praying, and some reading Scripture, ye would have been refreshed.

Psalm xi.—John Welsh, minister of Ayr, was, in 1605, a prisoner in Blackness Castle. Very early one morning the guard came to fetch him and his fellow-prisoners to appear before the court at Linlithgow. On hearing the trumpet at the gate, he sprang out of bed, and calling to his companions "Courage, now, brethren, let us sing," began himself to sing this psalm—the others joining with him:—

1. I trust in God, how dare yee then
   Say thus my Soul untill:
   Flee hence as fast as any fowle
   And hide you in your hill?
2. Behold, the wicked bend their bowes,
   And make their arrowes prest:
   To shoot in secret and to hurt
   The sound and harmless brest.

. . . . . .

4. But hee that in his Temple is
   Most holy and most hie;
   And in the heavens hath his seate
   Of royal Majestie;
5. The poore and simple man's estate
   Considereth in his mind;
   And searcheth out full narrowly
   The manners of mankind.

STERNHOLD.

Psalm xvi.— Robert Blair, the famous Covenanting minister at St. Andrews, and grandfather of the author of "The Grave," was in 1619 very ill. Of his spiritual experience at that time he says :—

Though that scorching fever was burning my body, yet the love of God burning more fervently in my soul made me to feel no pain at all. It was not possible to my tongue then, nor my pen now, to express the great gladness and exulting of my spirit. I extolled my Lord and Saviour, yea, I sang to him, especially the 16th Psalm, for I felt within me that which is written in the end of that psalm.

Probably he was referring to its last two verses :—

10. Thou wilt not leave my Soul in grave,
For, Lord, thou lovest mee :
Nor wilt thou give thine holy One
Corruption for to see,
11. But wilt me teach the way to life,
For all treasure and store
Of perfect joy are in thy face
And power for ever more.

STERNHOLD.

It is told of Blair that later in life, in 1632, when suspended from the ministry under the *régime* of Episcopacy,—

to awaken and cheer up his heart he did in secret sing psalms to God . . . especially the 23rd, 33rd, and 71st psalms. In this he found great sweetness, and that the heart was the better seasoned all the day.

Psalm xx.—On October 17, 1579, King James made a public entry into Edinburgh. He was received by the Magistrates with much display and many ceremonies ; and, as part of these, "the musicians song the xx psalme, and others played upon the viols." And at the conclusion of a service in the Great Kirk the same psalm was sung :—

1. In trouble and adversitie
   The Lord God heare thee still:
   The Majestie of Jacob's God
   Defend thee from all ill.
2. And send thee from his holy place
   His help at every need:
   And so in Syon stablish thee,
   And make thee strong indeed.

STERNHOLD.

Psalm xxiii.—This psalm, in one or other of its many versions, has always had a unique place in the hearts of the Scottish people. In the earliest "Book of Common Order" it was in 1560 specified as being suitable to be sung after the appointment of ministers, elders, or deacons. Sometimes too, as in 1639, it was sung at the conclusion of the meetings of the General Assembly. Robert Blair, as we have seen, sung it in a season of depression. And John Welsh and his fellow-prisoners, of whom we have spoken in connection with the 11th Psalm, when the time of their banishment came, and they were about to sail from Leith on November 7, 1606, gathered their sorrowing friends around them at two o'clock in the morning for the farewell meeting. "After prayer, they sung the twenty-third psalm; and so with the great grief of the spectators set sail." These were the words of this old version which were sung that wintry morning on the shore at Leith:—

1. The Lord is only my support,
   And hee that doth me feede;
   How can I then lacke anie thing
   Whereof I stand in need.
2. He doth me fold in coates most safe,
   The tender grass fast by;
   And after driv'th me to the streames
   Which run most pleasantlie.

3. And when I feele myself near lost,
Then doth hee me home take ;
Conducting me in his right pathes,
Even for his own Names sake.
4. And though I were even at deathes doore,
Yet would I feare none ill ;
For by thy rod and sheepheardes crooke
I am comforted still.

5. Thou hast my table richly deckt
In despite of my fo :
Thou hast mine head with balme refresht,
My cup doth overflow.
6. And finally, while breath doth last,
Thy grace shall mee defend ;
And in the house of God will I
My life for ever spend.

WHITTINGHAM.

Psalm xliv.—The ecclesiastical sky of Scotland was growing dark in 1572. It was the year wherein took place the St. Bartholomew Massacre in France, the death of the Regent Mar, and the death of John Knox. Many earnest people, therefore, turned to this psalm, wherein the depressed and almost hopeless state of the Church is contrasted with the great history of God's doings for it in the past, closing with a piercing cry for a new interposition. James Melville in his diary says :—

Our Primarius (Principal of the University of St. Andrews), Mr. James Wilkie, a guid, peaceable, sweet auld man, caused sing commonly this year the 44th and 79th Psalms, which I learned by heart, for that was the year of the bloody massacres in France and great troubles in this country :—

1. Our eares have heard our fathers tell
And reverently record,
The wondrous works that thou hast done,
In alder time, O Lord.

2. How thou didst cast the Gentiles out
And stroydst them with strong hand,
Planting our fathers in their place,
And gave to them their land.

. . . . . .

11. Thou hast us given to our foes,
As sheepe for to bee slaine ;
Amongst the heathen everywhere
Scatt'red wee do remaine.

. . . . . .

17. For all this wee forget not thee
Nor yet thy Covenant breake ;
We turn not back our hearts from thee
Nor yet thy paths forsake.

STERNHOLD.

Psalms lii. and lvi.—In Whitelocke's *Memorials* we read :—

In the year 1646, King Charles 1st being in the hands of the Scots, a Scotch minister preached boldly before the king at Newcastle, and after his sermon called for the fifty-second Psalm which begins, "Why dost thou tyrant boast thyself, thy wicked works to praise." His Majesty thereupon stood up and called for the fifty-sixth Psalm, which begins, "Have mercy Lord on me I pray, for men would me devour." The people waived the minister's Psalm, and sung that which the king called for.

These are the first two verses of each psalm as given in this version :—

PSALM LII.

1. Why dost thou tyrant boast abroad,
Thy wicked works to praise ?
Dost thou not know there is a God
Whose mercies last always.
2. Why doth thy minde yet still devise
Such wicked wiles to warpe ?
Thy tongue untrue in forging lyes,
Is like a razour sharpe.

HOPKINS.

PSALM LVI.

1. O God to mee thy mercy show,
Whom men would soon swallow and devour.
Each day they strive to bring mee low,
Vexing mee sore from houre to houre.
2. Mine enemies dayly would mee eat,
For many do against mee fight,
O thou most high, yet in this strait
In thee my hope is surely pight.

CRAIG.

Psalm lxxvi.—When the news of the defeat and dispersion of the Spanish Armada came to Edinburgh, Robert Bruce, a descendant of the great King Robert, gave out this psalm to be sung by the assembled citizens at the Market Cross :—

1. In Jurie's land God is well known,
In Israel great is his Name,
2. He chose out Salem for his own,
His tabernacle of great fame
Therein to raise, and Mount Syon
To make his habitation
And residence within the same.

. . . . . .

7. Fearfull art thou, O Lord our guid :
Yea, thou alone, and who is hee
That in thy presence may abide,
If once thine anger kindled bee.
8. Thou makest men from heaven to hear
Thy judgments just, the earth for feare
Stilled with silence then we see.

PONT.

Psalm lxxix.—We have seen how James Melville learned by heart, and how Primarius Wilkie loved to sing, this psalm. It was also publicly sung on a memorable occasion, and was meant to express Scottish Church feeling in the peculiar circumstances of the time.

Oliver Cromwell had come to Glasgow, and on Sunday, October 13, 1650, attended service in the Cathedral. The minister, Zachary Boyd, preached, and he afterwards said: "We did sing Psalme 79 from the beginning to the 8 verse, and the rest of the Psalme after the sermon. Divers sojours did sing with us." The significance of the choice of this psalm will be understood when it is remembered that the Scots did not welcome the coming of Cromwell and his army :—

1. O Lord, the Gentiles do invade,
Thine heritage to spoile.
Jerusalem an heape is made,
Thy Temple they despoile.
2. The bodies of the saints most dear
Abroad to birds they cast :
The flesh of such as do thee fear
The beasts devour and wast.

. . . . . .

8. Beare not in minde our former faults,
With speed some pitie show :
And aid us, Lord, in all assults,
For wee are weak and low.
9. O God that gives all health and grace,
On us declare the same :
Weigh not our works, or sins deface
For honour of thy Name.

HOPKINS.

Psalm c.—This grand old psalm is the gem of the whole collection. It has been sung, almost unaltered and to the same tune, for more than three and a half centuries. The great and memorable occasions on which it has been used in vast gatherings are too numerous to mention. But we shall quote it as Kethe wrote it, and mark with *italics* the only words wherein it is altered in our present version :—

1. All people that on earth do dwell,
   Sing to the Lord with chearefull voice:
2. Him serve with *feare,* his praise foorth tell,
   Come yee before him and rejoice.
3. *The Lord yee* know is God indeed,
   Without our aid hee did us make:
   Wee are his flock, hee doth us feed,
   And for his sheep hee doth us take.

4. Oh enter then his gates with praise,
   Approach with joy his courts unto:
   Praise, laud, and blesse his Name alwaies,
   For it is seemly so to do.
5. For why? the Lord our God is good,
   His mercie is for ever sure:
   His truth at all times firmly stood,
   And shall from age to age endure.

KETHE.

Psalm ciii.—In the "Book of Common Order," authorised in 1560, it was recommended that after the administration of the Lord's Supper "the people sall sing the ciii. psalme"—so ancient is the custom which still generally prevails throughout Scotland. It is also a psalm which has been sung with comfort by many a dying saint. Thus Calderwood tells how in 1584 Mr. James Lowsone, one of the most notable ministers of this period, was on his sick-bed, and—

> three dayes before his deathe, he caused sing the 103rd Psalme: and again, immediatlie few houres before his death. When voice could not serve, his lippes were perceaved labouring to utter the words which were sung.

The same historian tells how, in 1611, Mr. John Chalmers, minister of Keith, regaining some strength on his dying bed—

> desyred the 124th psalme should be sung. Which being endit, he desyred the 103rd psalme to be sung: efter that, he conceived a prayer.

We give the first four verses of Psalm ciii. :-

1. My soul give laud unto the Lord,
   My Sprite shall doe the same :
   And all the secrets of mine heart
   Praise yee his holy Name.
2. Give thankes to God for all his gifts,
   Shew not thyself unkind :
   And suffer not his benefits
   To slip out of thy mind.

3. That gave thee pardon for thy faults,
   And thee restored again,
   For all thy weake and fraile disease,
   And heald thee of thy paine.
4. That did redeeme thy life from death,
   From which thou couldst not flee :
   His mercy and compassion both
   Hee did extend to thee.

STERNHOLD.

Psalm cxxiv.—Both the metrical rhythm and the music of this notable psalm were adopted from the French Psalter. The psalm is to be found, but somewhat slightly altered, in the second version of our present-day Psalter, and we still sing it to the same tune. It has long been known in Scotland as "Durie's Psalm," on account of the following incident in the life of John Durie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. He had been banished from his pulpit and the city for his boldness of speech in preaching against the high-handed acts of James VI. But the popular feeling was so strong in his favour that the sentence of banishment had to be recalled. He returned on Tuesday, September 4, 1582. He was met at the Gallowgreen and accompanied on foot up the High Street to St. Giles' Kirk by a concourse of people, which gradually swelled to the number of 2000, singing as they went. "At the Netherbow," as Calderwood describes the scene—

They took up the 124 Psalme, "*Now Israel may say,*" etc., and sung in such a pleasant tune in four parts, known to the most part of the people, that coming up the street all bareheaded till they entered in the Kirk, with such a great sound and majestie, that it moved both themselves and all the huge multitude of the beholders, looking out at the shots and over stairs, with admiration and astonishment: the Duke (Lennox) himself beheld, and reave his beard for anger; he was more affrayed of this sight than anie thing that ever he had seene before in Scotland.

John Durie's persecutor, King James VI., was subsequently the central figure when this same psalm was again exultantly sung. After his escape from Bothwell's attempt on his life he went, on December 28, 1591, to the Great Kirk of Edinburgh. Mr. Patrick Galloway preached the sermon, "and declared the King was come to give publict thanks to God for the same," and the 124th Psalm was sung.

We give this psalm in full, that the reader may be able to compare it with the same version, somewhat altered, in our Modern Psalter.

1. Now Israel
   may say, and that truly,
2. If that the Lord
   had not our cause maintained,
   If that the Lord
   Had not our right sustained,
   When all the world
   against us furiouslie
   Made their uproares,
   and said wee should all die,

3. Now long ago
   they had devoured us all,
   And swallowed quick,
   for ought that we could deeme,
   Such was their rage,
   as we might well esteeme:

4. And as the floods
with mightie force do fall,
So had they now
our life even brought to thrall.

5. The raging streames
most proud in roaring noise
Had long ago
ov'rwhelm'd us in the deep.
6. But loved bee God
who doth us safely keep
From bloodie teeth,
and their most cruell voice,
Which as a prey
to eat us would rejoice.

7. Even as a bird
out of the Fowler's grin
Escapes away,
right so it fares with us:
Broke are their nets,
and we have scaped thus.
8. God that made Heaven
and earth is our help then:
His Name hath saved
us from those wicked men.

WHITTINGHAM.

Psalm cxxvi.—This psalm has often expressed the feelings of godly people when they had occasion for rejoicing over the triumph of a righteous cause that had once been crushed. Thus James Melville, referring to the banishment of himself and others to Newcastle, said in his diary, that in 1585—

As in going, so in returning, we found the bountiful and gracious hand of our God with us, so that we had occasion divers times to sing unto the praise of our God that 126 Psalm.

Here is the last stanza of it:—

5. Full true it is,
that they who sow with tears indeed,
A time will come
when they shall reap in mirth and joy.
6. They went and wept,
in bearing of their precious seed,
For that their foes
full often times did them annoy;
But their return
with joy they shall sure see;
Their sheaves home bring,
and not impeded bee.

KETHE.

Psalm cxxx.—Row, the historian, gives the following picturesque and instructive incident in the life of Andrew Melville, which occurred in the year 1606:—

When he was brought before the Privy Council (in London) Bishop Bancroft (Archbishop of Canterbury), the preses, in absence of the King, commanded him to kneele, that he might answer to the Counsell and their demands upon his knees, according to the custom of England (for so these that were accused of high treason used to answer). But Mr. Andro Melville refusing to kneele, the Bishop commanded some officers or serjeants to put him to his knees; which when they had done, the honest servant of Jesus Christ being on his knees, with his eyes and his hands lift up to heaven, prayed—"To thee, O Lord, I make my moane," etc. and presentlie started to his feet againe.

Again and again this action was repeated, until at length he was permitted to "answer standing." What he said seems to have been the first verse of this psalm, which is:—

Lord to thee I make my mone,
When dangers mee oppresse;
I call, I sigh, plaint, and grone,
Trusting to find release.

WHITTINGHAM.

Psalm cxxxiii.—The General Assembly at Edinburgh in 1608, and the famous General Assembly at Glasgow in 1638, were closed by the singing of this psalm :—

1. O How happie a thing it is
   And joyfull for to see
   Brethren together fast to hold
   The band of amitie.
2. It cals to mind that sweet perfume
   And that costly Oyntment,
   Which on the Sacrificers head
   By Gods precept was spent.

   It wet not Aarons head alone,
   But drencht his beard throughout,
   And finally it did run down
   His rich attire about.
3. And as the lower ground doth drink
   The dew of Hermon hill ;
   And Syon with his silver drops
   The fields with fruit doth fill ;

   Even so the Lord doth powre on them
   His blessings manifold ;
   Whose hearts and minds without all guile
   This knot do keep and hold.

WHITTINGHAM.

Psalm cxlviii.—The psalm was written in the same metre as the second version of the same in our Modern Psalter. We give the first two stanzas of it, and also Psalm cl., as specimens of the work of two writers not previously mentioned :—

1. Give laude unto the Lord,
   From Heaven that is so hie ;
   Praise him in deed and word,
   Above the starrie skie ;
2. And also yee
   His Angells all
   Armies royall
   Praise him with glie.

3. Praise him both Sun and Moon,
Which are so clear and bright ;
The same of you be done
Yee glist'ring stars of light ;
4. And eke no lesse
Yee Heavens faire
And cloudes of the aire
His laude express.

PULLAIN.

Psalm cl.—This is the rendering of the psalm with which the Old Scottish Psalter ends :—

1. Yeeld unto God the mighty Lord
Praise in his Sanctuarie,
And praise him in the firmament,
Which shews his power on hie.
2. Advance his Name, and praise him in
His mightie acts alwayes ;
According to his excellence
Of greatness give him praise.
3. His praises with the princely noise
Of sounding trumpets blow ;
Praise him upon the viole, and
Upon the harp also.
4. Praise him with timbrell and with flute,
Organs and virginals ;
5. With sounding cymbals praise yee him,
Praise him with loude cymbals.
6. Whatever hath the benefite
Of breathing praise the Lord ;
To praise the name of God the Lord
Agree with one accord.

NORTON.

4. Its Conclusions or Doxologies

During the eighty-six years of its official life there were many editions of the Old Scottish Psalter, some of them with varying features as to their contents, issued by different publishers. It was the law that no religious

book could be published without having been revised by the Church and licensed by the civil authority. This law, however, was sometimes forgotten or evaded. Thus, without this twofold sanction, Thomas Bassandyne, a printer in Edinburgh, published in 1568 a psalm-book, in the end of which was found printed a secular love-song called "Welcome, Fortune"; and he was required by the General Assembly to call in and suppress the entire edition. Several of these subsequent editions contained a variety of matter, such as Calendars, Spiritual Songs, etc.; but, as long as the additions were not considered harmful, and the text of the psalms was not altered, these editions seemed to have been allowed. For instance, seemingly without special ecclesiastical authority an edition appeared in 1610, giving in the margin of each psalm the prose rendering, taken from what was then the New—*i.e.* our Authorised—Translation of the Bible, so that the reader might have a double means of comprehending the sense. Perhaps it was in this way that there appeared in 1595 an edition which calls for our special attention. It contained the "Book of Common Order," etc., but the part of it containing the psalms bore this title:—

The Psalmes of David in Metre—According as they are sung in the Kirk of Scotland. Together with the Conclusion or Gloria Patri, efter the Psalme; and alsna an Prayer efter eurie Psalme agreeing with the mening, thairof. James v. 13 — If anie be afflicted let him pray; and if anie would be merie let him sing Psalmes. Prented at Edinburgh be Henri Charteris 1595. Cum Privilegio Regali.

The peculiar feature of this edition was its **Conclusions** and its **Prayers**. And we can understand how it appeared, if not with ecclesiastical sanction, yet *cum privilegio regali*; for at this time it was in the heart of James VI. to impose Episcopacy in Scotland, and these

Conclusions and Prayers were, rightly or wrongly, regarded as having a prelatic flavour. The "thin edge of the wedge" appeared in an edition published by the before-mentioned Bassandyne in 1575; but in it there was only one Conclusion, which was attached to the 148th Psalm, and was as follows:—

Gloir to the Father be
And to the Sone maist sweit,
The samin gloir give we
Unto the hailie Spreit.
As was before
God create all,
Is now, and shall
Be evermore.

It was twenty years later—*i.e.* in this edition of 1595—that these "**Conclusions**" appeared for the first time as a complete set of Doxologies. They numbered thirty-two, to suit each variety of metre, so that one might be sung at the close of each psalm, or part of a psalm. They seem to have had an intermittent and precarious existence. They were discarded in the editions of 1611 and 1615. They reappeared again in the editions of 1633, and they were finally rejected from the Modern Psalter of 1650. Yet they seem at times to have commended themselves to the people, for in 1638 Baillie speaks of the singing of *Gloria Patri* as being the "constant practice of our Church," and at a subsequent date there were some who spoke regretfully of their loss. Thus, after the Restoration of Charles II., we read in "the *Mercurius Caledonius* of a minister who, preaching before Parliament on the 27th January 1661, 'restored us to *Glory to the Father* to be sung at the end of the Psalmes,' and this, it is said,' has been a great stranger to our Kirk these many years.'"[1]

It is to be observed, however, that these Conclusions

[1] *Baillie's Letters and Journals*, vol. iii. p. 529.

often contained a prayer, as well as an ascription of praise to the Holy Trinity. Thus the one given as suitable for the first psalm, and for any other psalm in common metre, was :—

O Lord thou art the readie help,
Of them that traistis in thee,
Saif and defend thy chosen flock
That now distressed be.

Gloir to the Father, and the Sone,
And to the hailie Gaist
As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ay shall last.

Sometimes the Conclusion did not contain as many lines as were in the stanza of the psalm, but only so many as were needed to complete the stanza when there were odd lines at the end of the psalm. Thus each stanza of the 47th Psalm contained twelve lines, except the last, which had only four lines ; and, therefore, an eight-line Conclusion was provided for it. These four lines were :—

For shields of the world
Belong to the Lord ;
His Name to exalt
Let all men accord.

And then the Conclusion came in :—

And gif him all glorie
In Psalmes most sweit ;
And to his Sonne Christ,
And blist Paracleit.
Quhilk from the beginning,
Did ever extend,
And so shall continew
Warld without end.[1]

[1] In *The Psalter in Metre*, prepared in 1899 by a Committee representing the leading Presbyterian Churches in Scotland and Ireland, there are provided seven Conclusions or Doxologies for optional use in various metres, so that one can be sung after any of the psalms.

5. Its Prayers

It is believed that it was only in this edition of 1595 that there appeared a full complement of these prayers. There were one hundred and fifty of them—one at the end, and founded on the sense, of each psalm. Who were their authors, or from what source they were compiled, cannot now be told. They were, in some respects, like the "Collectes"—one for each psalm—which appeared in Archbishop Parker's version in 1560. But although they were composed in the Scottish dialect they do not seem to have taken any great hold on the people. If, therefore, they came at all into general use, they seem soon to have fallen into disuse.

We give as specimens, the *Gloria*, and the *Prayer* which appeared at the end of the 67th Psalm :—

To God our Father
And to his deir Sone
And to the hailie Gaist
Quhilk three are all one :
Be gloir as it was
In all tymes bygone :
Is now, and sall be
Quhen tyme sall be none.

Eternall God, the Father of all lichts, without the knawledge of quhome, we are mair miserabil then the verray brute beistis : extend thy blessing over us, and make that thy maist hailie Name may be knawin throughout the haill earth, and may be worshipped of all pepill and nations : to the intent that all men feiling thy mercifull benediction, may walk in thy feir, as we are teachit be Jesus Christ thy Sonne. So be it.

CHAPTER IV

RIVAL SCOTTISH PSALTERS

The Old Scottish Psalter, as the years rolled on, became dear, and ever more dear, to the Scottish people. It was their first and only complete Metrical Version. It had become familiar to them through their use of it in private and public worship. It linked them to Geneva—the cradle of their Calvinistic theology, and the refuge of their banished fellow-countrymen. Their martyrs had sung its consoling strains in dungeons, in exile, and in their dying hours. And the brave defenders of civil and religious liberty had on the battle-field found in it their inspiring and defiant war-notes. It had been the psalm-book of Knox and Welsh and Melville. Moreover, it had inherent merits, in respect to varied metres and popular tunes, which commended it to the bulk of the people. No wonder, therefore, that, on account both of its worth and its associations, many good people, like Samuel Rutherford and Robert Baillie, were loath to give it up. Yet it had not run half its official lifetime when its very existence became threatened. Changes in the vernacular language, the new translation of the Bible, and the growing desire to have, in the three kingdoms, uniformity of worship, conspired to call for a new metrical version of the psalms. Nor did this call die down until Rous' version had been accepted. But, in the

meanwhile, there appeared several rival competitors for its place. Chief among these were three.

1. King James' Version, 1631-1637

A meeting of the (Episcopally-minded) General Assembly was held at Burntisland in 1601. King James VI. was present, and, as he was ever ready to do, made a speech. The question of a new translation of the Scriptures, of an addition to the Prayer-Book, and of an improved version of the Metrical Psalms was raised. The subject in its threefold aspect appealed to the king, who was vain of his theological learning, his poetic gifts, and his liturgical taste; and he (as Archbishop Spottiswoode says)

> did persuade the undertaking of the work, shewing the necessity and the profit of it, and what a glory the performing thereof should bring to this Church . . . and when he came to speak of the Psalms, he did recite whole verses of the same, shewing both the faults of the metre and the discrepance from the text.

It naturally rejoiced the hearts of a subservient Assembly to hear such a speech from royal lips, and some of the brethren—among them Mr. Robert Pont—were appointed to consider the question and report. There the matter seems to have ended in the Assembly. But the king himself did not let it thus end. After his accession to the English throne his desire for uniformity became even stronger, and, as a first step, he appointed forty-seven ministers, "the most learned divines of the Church" in the three kingdoms, to revise the translation of the Bible, who, after the labours of three years, produced in 1611 what is still known as our Authorised Version of the Scriptures. But (says Spottiswoode) "the revising of the Psalms he made his own labour, and, at such hours as he might spare from the public cares, went through a

number of them, commending the rest to a faithful and learned servant." That "faithful and learned servant" was Sir William Alexander of Menstrie, afterwards created Earl of Stirling. He was a poet of no mean repute in his day, and was the author of some notable tragedies and heroic poems. He does not seem to have had a high opinion of the poetic powers of his royal master, although he was prudent enough to humour him. Thus, in a letter to his friend, Drummond of Hawthornden, he says:—

> Brother, I received your last letter, with the Psalm you sent, which I think very well done: I had done the same long before it came: but he (King James) prefers his own to all else: tho' perchance when you see it, you will think it the worst of the Three—No man must medelle with that Subject: therefore I advise you to take no more Pains therein.

This was in 1620, and in 1625 the king died. By that time he had translated only thirty-one selected psalms. But six years afterwards a complete new Psalter appeared, giving him the whole credit of the authorship. His thirty-one psalms had been revised and considerably changed, and the rest had been translated by the Earl of Stirling. The heart of his dutiful and like-minded son, Charles I., was set on their publication. In order to secure for them ecclesiastical as well as royal sanction, he wrote to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, asking that he "and some of the most learned Divynes in that our kingdom" should examine them and thereafter certify that "it be fitting that they be published and sung in churches, instead of the old translation." The request was dated August 25, 1626. The certification seems to have been slow in coming, but to have come at length. For the version was published in 1631, with this title: "The Psalmes of King David, Translated by King James," and with this *authorisation*:—

Charles R—— Haueving caused this Translation of the Psalmes (whereof our late deare Father was Author) to be perused, and it being found to be exactly and truly done, wee doe hereby authorize the same to be Imprinted according to the Patent graunted thereupon, and doe allow them to be sung in all the Churches of oure Dominiones, recommending them to all our goode Subjects for that effect.

Copies of this translation were sent to certain Presbyteries, with the injunction to report their opinion to the next Diocesan Assembly. In the meantime the indignation of the leal-hearted Presbyterians of the country was aroused, and one of them—believed to be Calderwood—drew up and circulated a lengthy protest, entitled "Reasons against the Reception of King James' Metaphrase of the Psalms." He protested against the royal invasion of the jurisdiction of the Church; he set forth the disadvantages of supplanting their familiar and much-loved Psalter; and, in plain-spoken language, he objected to the "harsh and thrawen phrases, new coined and court terms, poetical conceits, and heathenish liberty which occurred in the new meeter and served to mak people glaik." The spirited protest was, doubtless, amply justified, yet the condemnation of the version, as a whole, from a literary point of view, was perhaps too sweeping.

King Charles was incensed by the opposition thus excited. And his next step was more determined. In the edition of 1631 he only *recommended* and *allowed*; but in December 1634 he enjoined the Privy Council of Scotland "that no other psalmes of any edition whatsoever be either printed heirefter within that our kingdom, or imported thither, either bound by themselff or otherways, from any forrayne parts." To give effect to the king's injunction, there was published in 1636 a new edition, which, however, was greatly altered from that of 1631, although it appeared with the same title, *The*

Psalms of King David, Translated by King James. Indeed, the alterations were so many and so great "as to lead one to consider them *two separate versions* rather than *two editions* of the same version" (Macmeekan, p. 18). The small modicum of King James' work to be found in the published psalms "translated by King James" is a literary curiosity, which may be seen by comparing what has been preserved in his own handwriting with what appears under his name in these two editions. We give a specimen of the first psalm in all the three :—

From King James' MS.[1]

1. That mortal man most happy is and blest
Who in the wickeds counsals doth not walk,
Nor zit in sinners wayis doth stay and rest,
Nor sittis in seatis of skornfull men in talk,
2. But contrair fixis his delicht
Into Jehouas law,
And on his law, both day and nicht
To think is neuer slaw.
3. He salbe lyk a plesant plantit tree,
Upon a reuer syde incressing tal,
That yieldis his frute in saison dew, we see:
Whose plesant leif doth neuer fade nor fal.
Now this is surely for to say
That quhat he takes in hand
It sal withoutin doute alway
Most prosperously stand.
4. Bot wickit men ar nowayis of that band;
But as the caffe quhich be the wind is tost:
5. Thairfor they sall not in that iugement stand
Nor yett among the iust be sinneris lost.
6. For gret Jehoua cleirly knowis
The iust mens way upricht,
But sure the wickeds way that throwis
Sall perish be his micht.

[1] A volume of psalms, in the Scottish dialect, written with His Majesty's own hand, is preserved in the British Museum. MSS. Reg. 18, B. xvi.

From 1631 Edition

1. The man is blest that doth not walke
where wicked counsells guide ;
Nor in the way of sinners stands,
nor scorners sits beside :
2. But of the Lord he on the law
doth ground his whole delight ;
And on his law doth meditate
devoutly day and night.

3. He shall be like a planted tree,
the streames of waters neare :
Whose pleasant boughs bring timely fruit
in season of the yeare.
4. His leafe it never wither shall
as winters blasted prey :
And whatsoever he designes,
shall prosper every way.

5. But wicked men are nothing so,
for they as chaffe shall prove ;
Which whirling windes doe drive away
and from the earth remove.

From 1636 Edition

1. The man is blest who to walke in
th' ungodlies counsell hates,
And stands not in the sinners way
nor sits in scorners seats.
2. But in the Lord's most holy law
he hath his whole delight,
And in his law doth meditate
devoutly, day and night.

3. He shall be like a tree that grow'th
the streames of waters neare,
Whose pleasant boughs bring timely fruit
in season of the yeare :
4. His leafe shall never withered be,
as winters blasted prey,
And whatsoever thing he doth,
shall prosper every way.

5. They who are wickedly dispos'd
no such assurance finde ;
But like unto contemned chaffe,
are tossed with the winde.

A similar comparison of other psalms, as given in the three collections, would show as many and as great alterations. It was the edition of 1636 which Charles I. strove to thrust as King James' version on the Scottish Church. He had imposed the Episcopal form of *government*, and he was about to impose also the Episcopal form of *worship*. With this view a Service Book, known as Laud's Liturgy, was drawn up, and to it was attached King James' version of the Psalms. This book of prayers and psalms all ministers were by royal mandate enjoined to begin to use on Sabbath, July 23, 1637. It was a daring and, as it proved, for the king a disastrous mandate. It raised a storm which, beginning in Edinburgh and sweeping over all the land, was never wholly allayed until Prelacy was abolished in Scotland and the King's head had rolled from the block at Whitehall. On that eventful July day the Dean of Edinburgh attempted to obey the king's injunction in St. Giles' Kirk. At the forenoon service, attired in a white surplice, he entered the reading-desk and began to read the service from the new Prayer-Book. As it was the seventh Sunday after Trinity, this collect fell to be said :—

Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of Thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We cannot tell how far (but it could not have been far) the Dean had got in the service when there arose a commotion which soon grew wild and general. The scene became one of uproar and confusion, in which

whispered murmurs swelled into articulate shoutings. The shrill voices of the women were loudest. Some cried, "Woe! woe!" Others cried, "Sorrow! sorrow! for this doleful day that they are bringing in Popery among us!" And one of them, Jenny Geddes—the heroine of the day—unable to control her indignation, lifted the stool on which she had been sitting and hurled it at the head of the Dean, exclaiming—"Villain, will ye say mass at my lug?" The tumult thereupon increased; and it was only after the rioters had been ejected and the doors securely closed that the service went on to the end. It was not simply the reading of prayers from a book—for prayers read from the Scottish "Book of Common Order" had been customary—but it was reading prayers from what was considered an alien and semi-popish book, sent from England, which stirred the Protestant and patriotic feelings of the independent Scots. The memorable event of that day practically sealed the fate of Laud's Liturgy, and also King James' version of the psalms. Perhaps the latter deserved a better fate, especially as the major part of it was from the pen of the Earl of Stirling. But it was rejected because, although of Scottish make, it had been imposed "by royal mandate," and had come in the tainted company of an English Liturgy. And so the Earl of Stirling, to whom had been granted the sole privilege of printing it for thirty-one years, got neither pecuniary advantage nor literary honour by its production.

We may give, as a further specimen from this version, the 23rd Psalm as translated by the Earl of Stirling. There is no rendering of it by King James—

1. The Lord of all, my Shepeard is,
   I shall from want be free:
2. He makes me in green pastures lye,
   and neare calm streames to be.

3. He doth restore my soul, and leads
the way that I should take :
Into the paths of righteousnesse,
even for his own names sake.

4. Though through the vale of deaths black shade
I walk, I'le fear no il ;
Thou art with me, thy rod and staffe
afford me comfort still.

5. Thou for my food, before my foes
a table dost bestow ;
And do'st with oyle annoynt my head,
and mak'st my cup o'erflow.

6. With mercy, goodnesse, all my daies
shall surely follow me :
And in the Lord's own house I will
a dweller ever be.

2. Sir William Mure's Version

The attempt of Charles I., although a signal failure, did not prevent others from turning their thoughts to what was felt to be a real desideratum—a revision of the metrical version of the psalms. Influential friends—among others, Baillie—induced an Ayrshire poet, Sir Wm. Mure of Rowallan, to undertake the work. He was the lineal representative of a very old and well-known family, and was born about 1594. He was a man of fine character and of considerable gifts—a soldier, a man of affairs, and a poet. At the commencement of the religious troubles of the time he espoused the popular cause, commanded a company in an Ayrshire regiment raised against the king, fought and was wounded in the battle of Long Marston-moor in July 1644, and was engaged at the storming of Newcastle in the following month. He was a member of the Parliament or Convention of 1643, by which the Solemn League and Covenant was ratified with England.. He was also a

poet of no mean merit. In his earlier years his poetry was chiefly amatory ; but later in life his Muse became much more serious. Amongst his largest and most ambitious works were a *Translation of some Books of Virgil* ; a religious poem, which he called "The Joy of Tears" ; and another, entitled "True Crucifixe for true Catholickes," which was meant as an exposure of the prime object of Romish idolatry. Another of his works was an entire version of the psalms, which seems to have engaged his attention for about ten years, and to have been finished in 1639. So far as is known, it was never printed. It was preserved, however, in manuscript, with this title :—

"Some Psalmes Translated and presented for a proof to publick view, whereby to discerne of the whole being conformed to this Essay : By a weilwiller to the work of Reformatioun, who makes humble offer of his weak endeavours."

Dr. Laing says that this MS. was, in his day, in the possession of James Dennistoun, of Dennistoun, Esq., and that specimens from a more perfect MS. are given in the Appendix to "The Historie and Descent of the House of Rowallane. By Sir William Mure, Knight, of Rowallane. Written in, or prior to, 1657. Glasgow, 1825."

Our present interest in this version lies in the two facts that (1) Robert Baillie, one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, when engaged with others in the selection of a Psalter for the three kingdoms, wrote on January 1, 1644, to his constituents in Scotland, saying, "I wish I had Rowallane's Psalter here, for I like it better than any I have yet seen" ; and that (2) the General Assembly on August 28, 1647, in instructing its Committee "for revising the Paraphrase of the Psalmes brought from

England," recommended them "for this purpose to make use of the travels of Rowallane." Thus this version, although only in manuscript, was known to Baillie and to many members of the General Assembly, and must therefore have contributed something to our most modern version.

The following are specimens of the manner in which the psalms were rendered by Sir Wm. Mure :—

Psalm XXIII.

1. The Lord my sheepheard is, of want
   I never shall complaine,
2. For me to rest on, hee doth grant
   greene pastures of the plaine.
3. He leads me smoothest brookes beside,
   and doth my soul reclame :
   Yea me by righteous paths doth guyd
   for glorie of his name.

4. The valley dark of deaths aboade
   to passe, I'le fear none ill,
   For thou art with me, Lord, thy rode
   and staffe me comfort still.
5. For me a table thou dost spread
   in presence of my foes ;
   With oyle thou dost anoint mine head,
   by thee my cup o'erflows.

6. Mercie and goodnes all my dayes
   with me shall surelie stay
   And in thy house to dwell alwayes,
   O Lord, my count I'le lay.

Psalm CXXII.

I joy'd, when to the hous of God
   we'l go, to me they said.
Jerusalem within thy gates
   our feet thy courts shall tread.

Thou built art O Jerusalem,
as comlie cities be,
Whose pairts compactlie all contriv'd
togither do aggree.

Thither the Tribs, Jehouah's tribs
to prayse his name repair,
To Israel's glory they go up
the testimonie there.
For throns of Judgement there, the throns
of david's hous are sett.
Pray for her peace : Jerusalem,
much good thy lovers gett.

Tranquilitie and welfare have
they, Peace be in thy fort,
Prosperitie thy palices
may fill above report.
O peace be in thee, for my mates
and brethrens sake I'le say,
And for the hous of God our Lord
thy good I'le wish alway.

3. Zachary Boyd's Version, 1646-1648

Another competitor for the coveted place of the Old Scottish Psalter—and a formidable one, as being the work of a local and influential Scottish divine—was the metrical version by Zachary Boyd.

Zachary Boyd was born about 1585 in Kilmarnock, where he received his earliest education. In 1601 he proceeded to Glasgow College, and thence, two years afterwards, to the University of St. Andrews, where he remained from 1603 to 1607, and where, in the latter year, he took his degree of M.A. He was descended from the Boyds of Pinkhill, a family of some standing in Carrick, Ayrshire, and was a cadet of the noble family of Kilmarnock. Being possessed of private means, he was able to follow a common practice of the

time in continuing his studies on the Continent. At the age of twenty-two he entered the College of Saumur in France, then the chief Protestant seminary of that country, where he was first a student and then a regent or professor. Sixteen years he spent in France, during four of which he was a preacher of the Gospel. But, being driven thence by Romish persecution, he returned to his own country; and in 1623 he was appointed minister of the Barony Parish, Glasgow. There, to his congregation worshipping in the gloomy crypt of the Cathedral, he ministered till the close of his life in the end of 1653 or beginning of 1654. His position in Glasgow was singularly influential. During the latter years of his life he held some of the highest offices in the University. Thrice he was its Dean of Faculty; thrice he was its Rector; and he finally became its Vice-Chancellor. By gifts and bequests he was also its munificent benefactor. He was the leading minister of the City; and it was his service, as we have seen, that Oliver Cromwell attended when he spent a Sunday in Glasgow. He was also one of the leaders of the General Assembly. He was a man of high character and deep piety; and, amid all his varied duties, he found time to be a devout and diligent student. In addition to his published works he left an immense mass of manuscripts written with his own hand. But it is his work in preparing a metrical version of the psalms for use in the Church which here concerns us. He seems to have been engaged on it for about ten years previous to 1646, when there appeared a volume with the title :—

"The Psalms of David in meter. By Mr. Zachary Boyd, Preacher of God's Word. The third edition. Printed at Glasgow by George Anderson. Anno 1646."

This version was known to the General Assembly in

1647, for, when appointing a Committee (as we shall see later on) to revise Rous' version, it "recommended them to make use of the travels of Rowallan and of Mr. Zachary Boyd." It is this remit of the Assembly that keeps Zachary Boyd's version in the succession of those Scottish Psalters which contributed something to our present version. The same Assembly asked him to translate the "Spiritual Songs" into metre and "to report his travels" to the Commission of Assembly. This he did. It was remitted by the next Assembly to a Committee to revise his labours and to report. But no report seems to have been forthcoming.

Parties were divided in their opinion of Zachary Boyd's version. Robert Baillie, no mean judge, did not think much of it. He wrote :—

> Our good friend, Mr. Zachary Boyd, hes putt himself to a great deal of paines and charges to make a psalter, but I ever warned him his hopes were groundless to get it receaved in our churches, yet the flatteries of his unadvysed neighbours makes him insist in his fruitless design. The Psalms were often revised and sent to presbyteries. Had it not been for some who had more regard than needed to Mr. Zachary Boyd's psalter, I think they had passed through in the end of last Assembly.

Thus it was in the interests of Boyd's version that some of his "unadvysed neighbours" protracted the revision and delayed the acceptance of Rous' version, which was ultimately sanctioned on November 23, 1649. The laudable ambition and sanguine hopes of Zachary Boyd were then finally frustrated.

Up till the last he had laboured at perfecting his version; for he published another and revised edition in 1648. From it we quote the 23rd and 100th Psalms; and the reader may compare the latter with the second version of the 100th Psalm in our present version.

Psalm XXIII.

1. The Lord's my shepheard, I'le not want.
2. He makes me by good will
   Ly in green pastures, he me leads
   beside the waters still.
3. My soul likewise he doth restore,
   and me to lead doth take
   Into the paths of righteousnesse,
   and that for his Names sake.
4. Yea, though through valley of deaths shade
   I walk: I'le fear no ill,
   For thou art with me, thy rod and
   thy staffe me comfort still.
5. Thou set'st in presence of my foes
   a table me before,
   Mine head with oyl thou dost anoint,
   My cup it runneth o'er.
6. Goodness and mercy all the dayes
   of my life surely shall
   Me follow, and in the Lord's house
   for ever I will dwell.

Psalm C.

1. O all ye lands, unto the Lord
   make ye a joyfull noise:
2. Serve God with gladnes, him before
   Come ye with singing voice.
3. Know ye the Lord that he is God,
   he made us and not wee;
   His people and the sheep likewise
   we of his pasture be.
4. Enter his gates with thanks, and in
   his courts his praise proclame:
   Unto him also thankfull be,
   and do ye blesse his Name.
5. For he that is the Lord is good:
   his mercy's eternall:
   And als his truth it doth endure
   to generations all.

CHAPTER V

ROUS' ENGLISH PSALTER

1. General Remarks

In tracing the history of our Scottish metrical psalm-book it is necessary to go back a few years and again to enlarge our survey of the field.

We have seen how the book, combining Laud's Liturgy and King James' version, caused a stir in the Church of St. Giles which led to its rejection and final suppression. But the commotion which it raised was not thereby allayed. It expanded into the movement which resulted in the signing of the **National Covenant** in Greyfriars' Churchyard on March 1, 1638, in the rejection of Scottish Episcopacy, in the raising of an army by King Charles to crush the rebellion, and in the Covenanters taking up arms in self-defence. Those two armies faced each other at Duns Law in 1639, but parted without bloodshed after having concluded a temporary peace. The disaffection, however, spread to England, where King Charles' arbitrary and despotic measures provoked against him the hostility of the Puritans. The Scottish Covenanters and the English Puritans were therefore drawn together in a common cause, and cemented their union by **The Solemn League and Covenant.** That memorable covenant was signed in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, in September 1643, by the Lords and

Commons, and by the Assembly of Divines who on July 1st of that year had begun their sittings at Westminster. The Covenant was thereafter sent throughout England and Scotland for the signatures of all classes of the people. Its aim, unlike that of the *National Covenant*, which was only defensive, was highly aggressive. It was a solemn bond for "the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism," and for bringing about uniformity in Church government and in Divine worship, not on a Prelatic but on a Presbyterian basis. For the achievement of this aim there was convened at Westminster the famous **Assembly of Divines**, by an ordinance of the two Houses of Parliament, unsigned by the King, who was then at the head of his army fighting against the army of the Parliament. The Assembly was composed of one hundred and twenty-one divines and thirty lay assessors (of whom Francis Rous was one); and a few months after its first meeting it was joined by six commissioners from the Church of Scotland. Its sittings were held during the stirring times of the Civil War; and before the sittings terminated on February 22, 1648, the Royal cause had suffered disastrous defeats at Marston and at Naseby, Archbishop Laud had been executed, and Oliver Cromwell had become a power in the land. Within a year after the conclusion of their labours Charles I. had been beheaded at Whitehall, and the Monarchy had given place to the Commonwealth.

The Assembly had been originally composed of Episcopalians, as well as of Presbyterians and Independents; but the Episcopalians withdrew on the King proclaiming that the Assembly had been illegally convened. Its chief labours were directed to the drawing up of the *Confession of Faith*, the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, and the *Directory for Public Worship*. But it also set itself to provide a *Book of Praise* which, in

furtherance of the desired uniformity of worship, might be in common and authorised use throughout the three kingdoms. In connection with this last-named work the attention of the Assembly was called by the House of Commons to the metrical version of the psalms by Francis Rous.

Francis Rous.—It must be interesting to know something about this man whose name is inseparably linked with our present version of the metrical psalms. He was born at Halton, in Cornwall, in 1579. He was a younger son of Sir Anthony Rous, Kt., and was several times returned as a member of Parliament. He was a man of great learning and genuine piety. His writings were numerous and were chiefly of a religious character. His sympathies were with the Puritans, and he cherished the dream of England becoming a Commonwealth after the model of the Jewish Theocracy. But when he saw that his dream was not likely to be realised, he moved in Parliament that the government should be placed in the hands of Oliver Cromwell with the title of Protector. To Cromwell he consistently adhered, and was made a member of his Privy Council. He had been previously appointed to the lucrative position of Provost of Eton College—an office which he filled until his death on January 7, 1658. Eton seems to have become very dear to him, for in his last will, written in the year previous to his death, he says :—

> I desire my body may be interred and put to rest in the chapple of Eaton College, a place that hath my dear affections, and prayers that it may be a flourishing nursery of piety and learning to the end of the world.

His fellow-members, both in the House of Commons and in the Assembly of Divines, respected him for his piety, scholarship, and poetic genius; and they therefore chose his work as, at least, a basis for the proposed new

version of the metrical version of the psalms. He had published an edition in 1641, and a revised edition in 1643 before the Assembly of Divines had been convened.

2. Rous' Edition of 1641

It was with this volume that the parentage of our present version began. It bore the following title :—

The Booke of Psalmes in English Meeter, By Francis Rous . . . London, printed by R. Y. for Philip Nevil, at the signe of the Gun, in Ivie-Lane, 1641.

Copies of this edition are now exceedingly rare. Dr. Cotton, in his *Editions* of the Bible, says, "Few if any writers on the subject speak as if they had personally examined it. I never saw a copy in any library, public or private, except that of Dr. Bliss." We give from it a few verses of the 19th Psalm; and it may be easily seen that there is little resemblance between them and the corresponding verses in our Authorised Version :—

PSALM XIX.

1. The glory of Almighty God
   the heavens do speak and shew,
   The firmament his handy worke
   presenteth to our view.

2. Day unto day doth speak and tell
   his wisdom and his might;
   And a true knowledge of the same
   night sheweth unto night.

3. Both tongue and language bears the voice
   which they abroad do send
   Their speech through all the earth, their words
   go to the wide world's end

4. A tabernacle for the Sun
   in them prepared hath he;
   Whom, as a bridegroom coming forth
   we from his chamber see.

5. In glorious brightness forth he comes
from his appointed place.
As a strong man he doth rejoice
swiftly to run his race.

6. And all the skie from end to end
he compasseth about,
Nothing can hide it from his heat
but he will find it out.

3. Rous' Edition of 1643

This volume marks the second step in the lineal descent of our present version. It also is now a very rare book. It was revised and issued by Rous himself, probably with the laudable hope that it might attain the coveted position of being the psalm-book for the whole kingdom. Like its predecessor, it was published "at the signe of the Gun, in Ivie-lane." In the preface the author tells us the principle which guided him in his work. He did not, in his versification, aim so much at originality as at "amendment." He took the old version (seemingly of Sternhold and Hopkins) as a basis, and altered those psalms which "seemed to call aloud for amendment."

"Apprehending," he says, "many years past (which experience hath showed to be a true conjecture) that a forme wholly new would not please many, who are fastned to things usual and accustomed, I assaied only to change some pieces of the usual version, even such as seemed to call aloud, and, as it were undeniably for a change. These, being seen, it was desired that they should be increased ; which being done, they are here subjoyned."

It was this edition that on November 20, 1643, was ordered by the House of Commons to be submitted to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, desiring them

to give their advice, whether it may not be useful and profitable to the church, that the Psalms set forth by Mr. Rous be permitted

to be sung, the same being read before singing until the books be more generally dispersed.

Two days later this communication reached the Divines, and they thereupon, after debate, referred the book to three committees, each of which was to examine and report upon fifty psalms. Other matters, however, occupied their more immediate attention, and it was a full year before they were ready to give any answer to the House of Commons.

On December 16, 1644, the Assembly of Divines presented their advice "concerning visitation of the sick," etc., but intimated that they were not yet ready to make "Propositions touching the singing of Psalms." But eleven days afterwards they seem to have been ready; for we have this entry in the Journals of the House of Commons, under date December 27, 1644:—

The House being informed that some of the Divines of the Assembly were at the door, they were called in. Dr. Burgesse presented the remaining parts of the Directory for Public Worship, concerning the Keeping Days of Public Fasts, of Publick Thanksgiving, and some Propositions touching the singing of Psalms.

What the precise "Propositions" were, we are not told. But so many alterations and "amendments" were made on the edition—some of them by the author himself and all of them perhaps with his approval—that the book, as finally recommended by the Assembly of Divines and accepted by the House of Commons in 1646, was very different from that of 1643.

A comparison of the following three psalms as given in the two editions will show how many and great were the changes made by the Westminster Assembly revisers; and a similar comparison between those psalms in the 1646 edition and that of 1650, which is now our Authorised Version (whose text will be found in any of

our psalm-books), will show what further changes were made by the General Assembly revisers :—

PSALM XXIII. (Edit. 1643)

1. My shepheard is the living Lord,
   and he that doth me feed :
   How can I then lack any thing
   whereof I stand in need ?
2. In pastures green and flourishing
   he makes me downe to lye :
   And after drives me to the streames
   which run most pleasantly.

3. And when I feele my selfe neere lost,
   then home he me doth take :
   Conducting me in his right paths,
   even for his owne Names sake.
4. And though I were even at death's doore,
   yet would I feare none ill ;
   Thy rod, thy staffe do comfort me,
   and thou art with me still.

5. Thou hast my table richly stor'd
   in presence of my foe :
   My head with oile thou dost anoint,
   my cup doth overflow.
6. Thy grace and mercy all my daies
   shall surely follow me ;
   And ever in the house of God
   my dwelling place shall be.

PSALM XXIII. (Edit. 1646)

1. The Lord my shephard is, I shall
   not want : he makes me ly
2. In pastures green, me leads by streams
   that do run quietly.
3. My soul he doth restore again,
   and me to walk doth make
   On in the paths of righteousnesse,
   ev'n for his own name's sake.

4. Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
I'le fear no evil thing:
Thou art with me, thy rod, thy staffe,
to me do comfort bring.
5. Before me thou a table fil'st
in presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oile anoint,
My cup it overflows.
6. Goodnesse and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
my dwelling place shall be.

PSALM LVII. vv. 1-4 (Edit. 1643)

1. Be mercifull to me O God,
be mercifull to me;
Because according to thy word
my soule doth trust in thee.
2. Yea, she unto the shadow flies
of thy wings her to cover;
Untill these sad calamities
be wholly passed over.
3. To God most High my earnest cry
in praier sent shall be;
Even to that God, who graciously
performeth all for me.
4. From heaven shall his power descend,
to save me from their spight
That would devoure me, God shall send
his mercy, truth, and might.

PSALM LVII. vv. 1-3 (Edit. 1646)

1. Be mercifull to me, O God,
thy mercy unto me
Do thou extend, because my soul
doth put her trust in thee:
Yea, in the shadow of thy wings
my refuge I will place
Until these sad calamities
do wholly overpasse.

2. My cry I will cause to ascend
unto the Lord most hy ;
Even unto God who all things doth
for me work perfectly.
3. He shall from heaven send, and me
from his reproach defend
That would devour me : God his truth
and mercy forth shall send.

PSALM XCIII. (Edit. 1643)

1. The Lord doth reign, and cloth'd is he
with majesty and light :
His works do shew him cloth'd to be
and girt about with might.
2. For this round world by his great strength
established hath he ;
Yea, he so surely hath it set
that mov'd it cannot be.

3. Of old most firmly stablisht is
thy Throne of majestie :
And thou without beginning art
from all eternitie.
4. The flouds, O Lord, have lifted up,
they lifted up their voice ;
The flouds have lifted up their waves,
and made a mighty noise.

5. The Lord this noise of many flouds
in might excelleth farre :
The Highest overcomes the sea,
when his waves mighty are.
6. Thy testimonies are most sure,
and surely lead to blisse ;
And holiness for ever, Lord,
in thine house comely is.

PSALM XCIII. (Edit. 1646)

1. God reigns : God's cloth'd with majesty :
God is with strength array'd :
He girds himself therewith : the world
moves not, it is so stay'd.

2. Thy throne is fixt of old, and thou
art from eternity.
3. The flouds, Lord, raise, flouds raise their voice;
flouds raise their waves on hy.

4. But yet the Lord that is on high
is more of might by farre,
Than noise of many waters is,
or great sea-billows are.
5. Thy testimonies every one
in faithfulnesse excell,
And holiness for ever, Lord,
thine house becommeth well.

4. Rous' Edition of 1646

This volume marks the third step in the lineal descent of our authorised Scottish Psalter. It had to encounter a very formidable competitor for the coveted honour. This was a metrical translation by William Barton, which was first published in 1644, and which ran through many editions—some of them greatly altered—until 1768. It is right, therefore, to give some facts about him and the fortunes of his book.

William Barton was a celebrated scholar of Oxford, where he took his degree of B.A. on October 23, 1633. In 1645 he was styled "Master of Arts and minister of John Zecharies, London." In 1656 he was appointed minister of St. Martin's, Leicester, and had bestowed on him by Cromwell the rectory of Cadeby, whence, however, he was ejected in 1662—the year in which, after the Restoration of the Monarchy, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, about a fifth of the English clergy, were, by the Act of Uniformity, driven from their parishes as Nonconformists.[1] He died sometime between 1672 and 1682.

In the rivalry between his version and that of Rous

[1] Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 609.

the two Houses of Parliament came to be divided. The Commons favoured that of Rous; the Lords that of Barton. It will be remembered that on November 20, 1643, the House of Commons had sent Rous' version to the Westminster Assembly of Divines. In the Journals of the House of Lords there occurs this entry:—

Oct. 7, 1645. Upon the humble petition of Wm. Barton, Master of Arts, read this day in the House, it is ordered that two books of David's Psalms, composed in English metre by the petitioner, and presented to their lordships, are hereby referred to the Assembly of Divines, to be read over and judged by them: and the result of their judgments thereupon returned to this House, that such further direction may be given respecting the same, as shall be meet.

To this order the Assembly of Divines respectfully answered on November 14 that by a previous order from the House of Commons they had examined and revised the translation by Mr. Rous, and had fully finished the work before receiving this order; yet they had appointed a Committee to consider this matter, and that their judgment was as follows:—

That albeit the said Mr. Barton had taken very good and commendable pains in his Metaphrase, yet the other version, so exactly perused and ammended by the said Mr. Rouse and the Committee of the Assembly with long and great labour, is so closely framed according to the original text as that we humbly conceive it will be useful for the edification of the Church.

This answer seemed at the time to settle the question against Barton's version. But in the spring of the following year he again petitioned the House of Lords, apparently with the humbler request that his version might receive an equal, if not an exclusive, authorisation; for in their Journals there is this entry:—

March 26, 1646.—Upon reading the petition of Mr. Wm. Barton concerning his Translation of his Book of the Psalms, it is ordered

to recommend the same to the Assembly of Divines, to certify to this House why these Psalms may not be sung in Churches, as well as other Translations, by such as are willing to use them.

Three weeks after this order was made, and one week before a reply came from the Assembly of Divines, there was sent from the House of Commons a communication to their Lordships asking their concurrence in the following order, which appears in the Commons Journals [1] :—

April 15, 1646.—Ordered, That the Book of Psalms set forth by Mr. Rous, and perused by the Assembly of Divines, be forthwith printed in sundry volumes: And that the said Psalms, and none other, shall, after the first day of January next, be sung in all Churches and Chapels within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick-upon-Tweede; and that it be referred to Mr. Rous, to take care for the true printing thereof . . . The Lords concurrence to be desired herein.

The "concurrence" does not seem ever to have been given. Their Lordships informed Mr. Knightly, the messenger from the Commons, who appears to have been awaiting an immediate reply, that they would "send an answer by messengers of their own." They appear to have been in a somewhat surly mood. Nevertheless, the order "was read twice and committed to the consideration" of ten Lords, whose names are given, "to report their opinions thereof." We do not know whether they ever gave in a report. Perhaps they deemed it unnecessary. For, on April 25, 1646, a message was brought to the House of Lords from the Assembly of Divines to the effect that they could not recommend that authority should be given for the singing of Mr. Barton's version, because "that, if liberty should be given to people to sing in Churches every one that Translation which they desire, by that means several Translations

[1] Vol. v. p. 509.

might come to be used, yea, in one and the same congregation at the same time, which would be a great distraction and hindrance to edification."

The House of Lords do not appear to have either further pressed their preference, or to have given their "concurrence." Rous' version, therefore, although it had received the *imprimatur* of the Assembly of Divines and of the House of Commons, was not, by statutory enactment, adopted as part of the "Uniformity of Worship" which was the dream of the age. And it does not seem to have taken any great hold in England. It was perhaps too simple and severe in its structural character. Moreover, its origin—issuing as it did from an Assembly composed chiefly of Presbyterians and Independents—gave it a taint distasteful to Episcopalians, who continued to use the version of Sternhold and Hopkins until it was displaced by that of Tate and Brady. The version of Barton, too, had at a later date come to the front. In 1654 he petitioned Parliament again, but this time the House of Commons, and, in consequence, got authority from the "Lord Protector and the Councill at Whitehall" for the printing of his version. It must have won some popularity; for he himself said in one of his prefaces that he knew of 1500 copies having been "carried over to Ireland."

Another rival of Rous' 1646 edition in England was the Scottish edition as revised by the General Assembly and published in 1650. Several eminent Nonconformist Divines in and around London acknowledged their preference for it, and in an address to the reader prefixed to one of the London editions said:—

> The Translation, which is now put into thy hands, cometh nearest to the Original of any that we have seen, and runneth with such a fluent sweetness, that we thought fit to recommend it to thy Christian acceptance: Some of us having used it already, with

great comfort and satisfaction. (Signed) Tho. Manton, D.D., Henr. Langley, D.D., John Owen, D.D., etc.

Yet another rival appeared later in a version published in 1719 with this title: "The Psalms of David, imitated in the language of the New Testament, and applied to the Christian state and worship: By Isaac Watts, D.D." This version became a great favourite with the Non-conformists. Dr. Rippon, in a sermon preached in 1802, said of Watts' Psalms:—

> They had not long appeared at the bar of the public before the general voice (with one or two illustrious exceptions) pronounced a flattering verdict on them—a verdict, the wisdom and justice of which have now been sanctioned by the imprimatur, I had almost said, of half a world.

Thus Rous' edition of 1646, which was the completed work of the English revisers, although fostered and commended by civil and ecclesiastical authority in England, obtained there no wide and lasting acceptance. In Scotland, however, it was to find a home.

We have already (at p. 68) given Rous' original rendering of some verses of the 19th Psalm. For the sake of comparison we give the same verses as rendered by his English competitors, Barton, Tate and Brady, and Dr. Watts:—

PSALM XIX. (BARTON'S)

1. The heavens give to understand
   the glory of the Lord.
   The operations of His hand
   the firmaments record.

2. Night unto night hath knowledge show'n
   and day with day confer'd:
   And speech or language there is none
   where their voice is not heard.

3. Their line doth close and comprehend
the vast earth round about:
Unto the world's remotest end
their words are passed out.

4. The Lord a Tabernacle there
did for the Sun compose:
Which as a Bridegroom doth appear
that from his chamber goes.

5. Rejoicing for to run a race
like to a champion stout;
At heavens furthest distant place,
begins his going out.

6. And he to heavens utmost end
his circuit makes compleat:
And there is nothing can defend
or hide it from his heat.

Psalm XIX. (Tate and Brady's)

1. The Heavens declare thy Glory Lord
Which that alone can fill:
The Firmament and Stars express
Their great Creator's skill.
2. Revolving Days, with every Dawn,
Fresh Beams of knowledge bring,
From darkest nights succeeding Rounds
Divine Instructions spring.

3. Their powerful Language to no Realm
Or region is confined:
'Tis Nature's Voice and understood
Alike by all mankind.
4. Their Doctrine's sacred sense itself
Through earth's extent displays:
Whose bright Contents the circling Sun
Around the World conveys.

5. No Bridegroom for his Nuptials drest
Has such a cheerful Face;
No giant does like him rejoice
To run his glorious Race.
6. From East to West, from West to East,
His restless Circuit goes;
And through his Progress cheerful Light
And vital Warmth bestows.

Psalm XIX. (Isaac Watts')

1. Great God the heavens well-order'd frame
Declares the glories of thy name:
There thy rich works of order shine:
A thousand starry beauties there,
A thousand radiant marks appear
Of boundless power and skill divine.

2. From night to day, from day to night,
The dawning and the dying light
Lectures of heavenly wisdom read:
With silent eloquence they raise
Our thoughts to our Creator's praise,
And neither sound nor language need.

3. Yet their divine instructions run
Far as the journies of the sun,
And every nation knows their voice:
The sun like some young bridegroom drest
Breaks from the chambers of the east,
Rolls round and makes the earth rejoice.

CHAPTER VI

ROUS' PSALTER IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIS volume marks the fourth step in the lineal descent of our Scottish Psalter, and is what is now known as our Authorised Version. How it came to be finally shaped and accepted must be told in some detail in this chapter. In the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which revised Rous' psalms and recommended the edition of 1646, were six **Commissioners from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland**—two lay and four clerical. They (especially the clerical portion of them) not only helped in the work of revision, but also recommended the book for the acceptance of the Church of Scotland. These Commissioners, therefore, acted an influential part in connection with our Psalter. So a few biographical notes about them may be interesting.

1. **The Duke of Lauderdale.**—He was born in 1616 and died in 1682. It was with his previous title of Lord Maitland that he went to the Assembly of Divines. He was then "a high-flying Covenanter." But when the times changed he also changed, and became one of the most pitiless persecutors of the Covenanters. After the Restoration he was created a duke by Charles II., and (says Principal Cunningham) "paid for the honour by becoming a ruffian. . . . There are few things in history more striking or more melancholy than to find

the Church of Scotland's representative in the Westminster Assembly of Divines become her cruel persecutor and a mocker at all sacred things."

2. **Sir Archibald Johnstone.**—He was a descendant of the family of Johnstone in Aberdeenshire. He was an eminent lawyer and statesman, and also a man of deep piety, who was ardently attached to the Presbyterian cause. Along with Alexander Henderson he drew up the National Covenant, and he was chosen to be Clerk to the famous General Assembly at Glasgow in 1638. He was appointed to fill successively such civil offices as Lord Advocate, Lord Register, etc. He was a member of the Scottish Parliament of 1643; and, fourteen years later, he was created a peer and sat in the Protector's Upper House with the title of Lord Warriston. He did not change with the changing times; and so, after the Restoration, he was early marked out for destruction. The charges laid against him were his official acts during the *régime* of the Commonwealth. He fled for safety to France, but a spy discovered his hiding-place in Rouen. In 1663 he was brought a prisoner to London, arraigned before Parliament, and sentenced to be hanged at Edinburgh in July of that year. Age and hardships had reduced him to a pitiable spectacle as he stood before his judges, and some of them commiserated him and asked for delay in the execution of the sentence; but one who fiercely opposed the proposal was his erewhile fellow-commissioner, the Duke of Lauderdale. At the scene of his execution he showed a fortitude and piety which entitle him to rank as one of the worthiest of the martyrs of the Covenant. He calmly gave a sign to the executioner to proceed, and then, says Wodrow, "crying out, 'O pray, pray! praise, praise!' was turned over, and died almost without a struggle, and with his hands lift up to heaven."

3. **Alexander Henderson.**—He was born about 1583 and died in 1646. He has been described as "one of the most eminent of the many eminent men whose names are interwoven with the annals of Scotland at probably the most interesting period of her history—the middle of the seventeenth century." He was at first the minister of Leuchars, but afterwards was translated to Edinburgh, where he took a foremost place in many civil and ecclesiastical affairs, too numerous here to recount. He was chosen, and until his death continued, to be the first Rector of the Edinburgh University; and he occupied the Moderator's Chair at the General Assembly of 1638. Once and again he was chosen as a commissioner to treat with the king. As we have said, he, along with Johnstone, drew up the document known as the *National Covenant*, and, in the Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, eloquently exhorted the people to sign it. And it was in the Greyfriars' Churchyard that he was buried in the sixty-third year of his age. The spite of his enemies was vented on his grave; for the monument erected by his nephew was demolished at the Restoration. It was, however, replaced at the Revolution.

4. **Samuel Rutherford.**—He was born about the year 1600, at the hamlet of Nisbet near Jedburgh. He took his degree of M.A. at Edinburgh in 1621, and in 1627 he was settled as minister of Anwoth, where he proved a most earnest, diligent, and successful pastor. But, "for failure to conforme" to the imposed Episcopacy of the time, he was in 1636 deprived of his cure, and banished to Aberdeen, a town said to be full of "Papists and men of Gallio's naughty faith." Surely there is a cynical touch in the sentence which prohibited him, among such a people, from opening his mouth in a pulpit. But he made up for this enforced silence by

conducting a voluminous correspondence with friends, which now, as *Rutherford's Letters*, forms one of the most famous books in sacred literature. Richard Baxter said of it: "Hold off the Bible, such a book the world never saw the like"; and C. H. Spurgeon called it "the nearest thing to inspiration which can be found in all the writings of mere man." Immediately after his restoration to Anwoth in 1639 he was appointed Professor of Divinity at St. Andrews, where he both taught learnedly in the College and preached powerfully in the Parish Church. In 1647 he was made Principal of the New College there; and subsequently he was twice offered a professor's chair in Holland. He was a man of great learning, and wrote several theological works, some of them infused with the spirit of fine practical piety, and some of them eminent for their acute reasoning and weighty arguments. It was the latter that excited the resentment of his opponents when they returned to power with the Restoration of Monarchy and the re-establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland. In 1661 he was deposed from all his offices, and he was summoned to appear before the next Parliament on a charge of high treason. But a more urgent summons had already come to him. The citation found him on his death-bed; and before Parliament met he had appeared before a "Juster Judge." In his dying hour he seemed to enjoy a singular rapture and elevation of spirit; and his last words were, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land." He died on March 29, 1661, and was buried at St. Andrews.

5. George Gillespie.—He was born at the Manse of Kirkcaldy, where his father was minister, on January 21, 1613. A precocious, able student, he became "an eminent divine at a time when divines were nearly the most eminent class of individuals in Scotland."

In 1638 he was ordained minister of Wemyss, in Fife, and in that same year he was appointed to preach one of the daily sermons before the General Assembly at Glasgow. In 1641 an attempt was made, but failed, to get him translated to Aberdeen; but in the following year he was removed by the General Assembly to Edinburgh, where, until his death, he continued to be one of its ministers. He was a man of great vigour, ability, and earnestness. Concerning his labours at the Westminster Assembly of Divines, Baillie wrote:—

> We got good help in our assembly debates, of lord Warriston, an occasional commissioner, but of none more than the noble youth Mr. Gillespie. I admire his gifts, and bless God, as for all my colleagues, so for him in particular, as equal in these to the first in the assembly.

In 1648 Gillespie had the honour to be Moderator of the General Assembly. But, seated in the Chair, he was seen to be in a very enfeebled state of health; and he died during the year of his Moderatorship, at Kirkcaldy, on December 17, 1648, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

6. **Robert Baillie.**—He was born in the Saltmarket, Glasgow, in 1602. He was descended from the Baillies of Lamington and, on his mother's side, from the Gibsons of Durie — two families distinguished in Presbyterian history; but he was educated and ordained as an Episcopalian. That was in the time of the First Episcopacy in Scotland; and it was from Archbishop Law that he received his orders in 1622, when, after having been a tutor and friend in the noble and pious family of Eglinton, he was presented to the parish of Kilwinning. But he gradually changed his views in ecclesiastical matters, and finally attached himself to the Presbyterian party. In 1636 he respectfully but firmly refused the request of Archbishop Law to

preach at Edinburgh in favour of Laud's Liturgy In 1638 he was sent by his Presbytery of Irvine to represent them in the General Assembly at Glasgow, and he supported, in a firm but moderate spirit, its anti-Episcopalian resolutions. In 1640 he was appointed by the Scottish Leaders to go with other commissioners to London, to prepare charges against Archbishop Laud for his innovations upon the Scottish Church, which were alleged to have been the cause of the insurrectionary war. "He was a man of extensive learning—understanding no fewer than thirteen languages, among which were Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Samaritan, Arabic, and Ethiopic,—and wrote Latin with almost Augustan elegance." In 1642 he was appointed Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow—an office which he held till the Restoration in 1660—and even after that event he was, through Court influence, appointed Principal. He was offered, but declined, a bishopric, and did not hesitate to express his dissatisfaction at the reintroduction of Episcopacy, which he considered to be "inconsistent with Scripture, contrary to pure and primitive antiquity, and diametrically opposed to the true interest of the country." When visited in his last sickness by the new-made Archbishop, he said to him: "Mr. Andrew, I will not call you my lord; King Charles would have made me one of these lords, but I do not find in the New Testament that Christ has any lords in his house." He died in July 1662. He wrote his famous *Letters and Journals* whilst he was in London attending the Assembly of Divines, and Principal Cunningham says of them that

> They furnish us with some pictures, as lifelike as photographs, of the principal actors then on the stage of affairs, and not unfrequently give us a peep of what was passing behind the scenes. It is the book of all to be read by those who would understand the period of the Covenant.

These, then, were the six Scottish Commissioners—eminent and learned men—who helped to shape at Westminster what are now the leading standards of our Scottish Church, and to produce what, when further revised, became our Authorised Metrical Version of the Psalms. It was they who sent down from London to Edinburgh, and recommended to the General Assembly for adoption, Rous' edition of 1646. But the General Assembly resolved, as it had formerly done in regard to the Old English Psalter, to subject the book to its own careful and independent scrutiny. Thus Rous' version had again, during the greater part of three years, to pass through the mill of revision and "amendment" before it was issued with the *imprimatur* of Scotland's Supreme Ecclesiastical Court.

It was on January 21, 1647, that Baillie submitted to the **Commission of the General Assembly** at Edinburgh a paper prepared by him and his fellow-commissioners suggesting the desirability of there being but one psalm-book for the sake of uniformity of worship, and recommending the acceptance of Rous' version. The following is an extract from the paper :—

> And becaus the singing of Psalms in churches is a part of the public worship of God, We desire that the Paraphrase of the Psalms in metre, as it is now examined, corrected, and approved by the Assembly of Divines here (*i.e.* in London), and by the Commissioners of the General Assembly in Scotland, may be lykwise authorised and established by Ordinance of Parliament.

The book itself, as "reprinted with the last amendments," however, was not then ready to be submitted. But, whilst awaiting its arrival, the Commission seems to have turned its attention to the subject, and anticipating that Rous' version might be accepted, to the regret and disappointment of Zachary Boyd, it adopted the following minute :—

11th February 1647. The Commission appoynts a letter of encouragement to be writtin to Mr. Zechariah Boyd for his paines in his Paraphrase of the Psalmes, shewing that they have sent them to their Commissioners at London, to be considered and made use of there by these that ar upon the same work.

The book was ready and despatched from London on February 16, 1647, and it was accompanied by a letter from the Commissioners, from which it seems that previous "animadversions" had been sought and received from the Scottish Church, and had been considered by "the worthy Gentleman"—Mr. Rous himself. The letter was presented to the Commission on February 23, and from it we give the following extract:—

Wee now send you the new Edition of the Paraphrase of the Psalmes as it wes approved by the Assembly heir, and by yourselves: the animadversions which you sent us being taken in their proper places, as the worthy Gentleman, who hath taken most paines in the worke assureth us. If you be now satisfied with it as it is, wee shall desire to know so much. One Psalme-book in the three Kingdomes will be a considerable part of Uniformity, if it can be fullie agreed upon both there and here: And we believe it is generally acknowledged, there is a necessitie of some change, there being so many just exceptions against the old and usuall Paraphrase. And we humblie conceive there will be as little controversy that this which we now send you, as it hath come through the hands of more examiners, so it will be found as neir the originall as any Paraphrase in meeter can readily be, and much neerer then other works of that kynd, which is a good compensation to make up the want of that Poeticall liberty and sweet pleasant running, which some desire. However, wee expect to know your pleasure in this, and in any other thing contained in our former letters, which yourselves shall judge to need an answere: and so wee rest. Your most affectionat Brethren to serve you.

G. Wynrame, Samuel Rutherfurd, Geo. Gillespie.

The first signature is a new name to us. **George Wynrame** of Libberton was admitted an advocate in 1620, and was appointed a Lord of Session, under the title of

Lord Libberton, in 1649. He played a conspicuous part in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the time; and it was doubtless, when so employed in London, that he became associated with the Scottish Commissioners there. On receipt of this letter the Commission seriously took up the matter; but, wishing to have a sufficient number of copies of the book to send down to Presbyteries so as to be able to present their views on it to the forthcoming meeting of the General Assembly, they returned their answer to the Commissioners, on February 23, thus:—

. . . We do acknowledge that one Psalme-book in the three Kingdomes wer a considerable part of Uniformity; but it can hardly be fullie agreed upon, if Presbyteries gave a previous consideration of it before the meeting of the Assembly; which may give them great satisfaction, and facilitat the approbation of it in the Assembly. Therfor, you will be pleased to send down a number of copies of this late Edition to our Clerk, whom we have appoynted to cause dispatch them to Presbyteries with diligence, to be considered by them; which we think the best and surest way to obtaine a full approbation of the work heir; wherof we make little question if you send a competent number of copies in tyme.

In reply to this communication the same commissioners wrote on March 9:—

Wee have now forescore copies in readiness to be sent by the first ship to your Clerk that by him they may be directed to the several Presbyteries.

These copies duly arrived in Scotland and were, doubtless, at once sent to Presbyteries. Whether any answers came up from these local courts before the meeting of the Assembly we cannot tell. But we know that Mr. John Adamson was appointed "to revise Rous' Paraphrase of the Psalmes, and Mr. John Rowe's observations thereupon, and to have his opinion thereof ready for the next Assembly."

The General Assembly met at Edinburgh under the Moderatorship of Rev. Robert Douglass, and seems to have received a report from some committee, and on August 28, 1647, passed an Act, which shows that the Assembly was not prepared off-hand to accept Rous' version, and contemplated with some regret the entire rejection of the Old Scottish Psalter, believing that "the Paraphrase of the Psalmes sent from England" might be improved by emendations from their own Scottish poets and scholars. The Act is a fundamental one, and is therefore given *in extenso* :—

The Generall Assembly having considered the report of the Committee concerning the Paraphrase of the Psalmes sent from England, and finding that it is very necessary that the said Paraphrase be yet revised: Therefore doth appoint Master John Adamson to examine the first fourty Psalmes, Master Thomas Crawford the second fourty, Master John Row the third fourty, and Master John Nevey the last thirty Psalmes of that Paraphrase: and in their examination they shall not only observe what they think needs to bee amended, but also to set downe their own essay for correcting thereof: and for this purpose recommends to them to make use of the travels of Rowallan, Master Zachary Boyd, or of any other on that subject; but especially of our own Paraphrase, that what they finde better in any of these works may be chosen, and likewise they shall make use of the animadversions sent from Presbyteries, who for this cause are hereby desired to hasten their observations to them; and they are to make report of their labours herein to the Commission of the Assembly for Publike Affaires, against their first meeting in February next. And the Commission, after revising thereof, shall send the same to Provincial Assemblies (Synods) to be transmitted to Presbyteries, that by their further consideration, the matter may be fully prepared to the next Assemblie. And because some Psalmes in that Paraphrase sent from England are composed in verses which do not agree with the common tunes, therefore it is also recommended that these Psalmes be likewise turned into other verses, which may agree to the common tunes; that is, having the first line of eight syllabs, and the second line of six, that so both versions being together, use may be made of either of them.

Robert Baillie, having gladly got leave of absence from the Westminster Assembly, was present at this meeting of the General Assembly, and made a speech at it in favour of Rous' version. To this he refers when he afterwards wrote :—

I was glad to be a carrier of a Confession of Faith ; also of a Psalter which to my knowledge cost the (Westminster) Assembly some considerable paines, and is like to be one necessar part of the three Kingdomes uniformities.[1]

He seems to have been satisfied with the progress made at the General Assembly ; for, on September 1, 1647, he wrote : "We have put the new Psalter also in a good way."[2]

It is to be noted that it is to the above Act of Assembly that we owe the words : "Another of the same," which appear at the head of thirteen of our psalms ; also that this Act makes no reference to the ill-starred version of King James, and that it suppresses the name of Rous. Rous, whose name was well-known and loved in England, had now become somewhat of a "suspect" in Scotland. The Scots were Royalists, but Rous held Republican views. It was to this fact that Baillie alluded when, on September 14, 1649, he wrote :—

I think at last we shall get a new Psalter. I have furthered that work ever with my best wishes ; but the scruple now arises of it in my mind, the first author of the translation, Mr. Rous, my good friend, has complied with the Sectaries, and is a member of their republic : how a Psalter of his framing, albeit with much variation, shall be received by our Church, I do not well know ; yet it is needful we should have one, and a better in haste we cannot have.[3]

The four ministers whom the Act appointed to "examine" the psalms seem to have reported to the Commission, not in February, but in April, 1648.

[1] *Baillie's Letters and Journals*, vol. iii. p. 12.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 21. [3] *Ibid.* p. 97.

On the fourteenth day of that month the Commission appointed the ministers of Edinburgh, or any three of them, to examine the work of these revisers, and to confer with them thereupon, and to report. It was doubtless after their report that on April 20 the Commission appointed "Masters John Adamson, Doctor Colvill, James Hamilton, John Smith, John Neve, and Patrick Gillespie, James Guthrie, to revise Rouse's Psalmes, and the amendments sent in from these that were appoynted by the Assembly to revise them, and to report their opinions. Their meeting to be the morne at 7 houres in the Colledge." This Committee must have met and reported. But, on May 1, 1648, another Committee, with similar instructions, was appointed, and consisted of Mr. Robert Douglass, George Gillespie, William Colvill, James Hamiltoun, John Smith, with Mr. John Adamson.

The General Assembly met at Edinburgh under the Moderatorship of George Gillespie; and, on August 10, 1648, passed this **Act**:—

"The General Assemblie appoints Rous' Paraphrases of the Psalmes, with the corrections thereof, now given in by the persons appointed by the last Assemblie for that purpose, to be sent to Presbyteries that they may carefully revise and examine the same, and thereafter send them with their corrections to the Commission of this Assemblie to be appointed for public affairs, who are to have a care to cause re-examine the Animadversions of Presbyteries, and prepare a report to the next Generall Assemblie; intimating hereby, that if Presbyteries be negligent hereof, the next Generall Assemblie is to go on and take the same Paraphrase to their consideration without more delay.

The "delay" was evidently becoming wearisome to the General Assembly. It seems as if obstruction was deliberately practised in the interests of Zachary Boyd's version. For Baillie wrote on August 28, 1648, concerning the progress of the Psalter in this Assembly:—

The Psalmes were often revised and sent to Presbyteries: had it

not been for some who had more regard than needed to Mr. Zacharie (Boyd's) Psalter, I think they had passed through in the end of the Assemblie ; but these also, with almost all references from the former Assemblies, were remitted to the next.[1]

But, notwithstanding the peremptory character of the Act, it is somewhat significant that it took more than four months before copies, "corrected according to these Animadversions given in the late Assembly," were ready for transmission to Presbyteries. It was only on January 5, 1649, that a copy was received by the Commission, who thereupon ordered "a competent number" to be obtained and to be transmitted. In a letter accompanying them, the Presbyteries were told: "It is not enough to finde out faults except yee also set downe your owne essay correcting the same." The Presbyteries were to report to the Commission.

The Commission, on June 7, 1649, received the Reports of the Presbyteries, and appointed them "to be delivered to the clerk who was to lend them out to Mr. John Adamsone, to be considered against next Assembly."

The General Assembly met at Edinburgh again under the Moderatorship of Rev. Robert Douglass on July 7, 1649, and, as Baillie says, sat "whole five weeks." It had much business on hand, and, greatly as it desired to bring the matter of the Psalm-book to a conclusion, it found itself unable to do so. Hence towards the close of its sittings it entrusted its authority to the Commission by the following **Act** :—

Edinburgh, 6th August, 1649. The General Assembly having taken some view of the new Paraphrase of the Psalmes in Meeter, with the corrections and animadversions thereupon, sent from several persons and Presbyteries, and finding that they cannot overtake the review and examination of the whole in this Assembly ;

[1] *Baillie's Letters and Journals*, vol. iii. p. 60.

therefore, now after so much time, some yeares bygone, that the worke may come now to some conclusion, they do ordain the Brethren appointed for perusing the same during the meeting of this Assembly, viz. Masters James Hamiltoun, John Smith, Hew Mackail, Robert Traill, George Hutcheson, and Robert Lowrie, after the dissolving of this Assembly, to goe on in that worke carefully, and to report their travels to the Commission of the Generall Assembly for public affaires, at their meeting at Edinburgh in November. And the said Commission, after perusall and re-examination thereof, is hereby authorised, with full power, to conclude and establish the Paraphrase, and to publish and emit the same for publick use.

The arduous and protracted work of such oft-repeated revisions had made all concerned desirous of bringing it to a speedy end. So the Commission took it up with great diligence. On the day after the Act of the Assembly was passed — August 7, 1649 — the Commission met and recommended the appointed Brethren "to hasten their corrections," and authorised the Moderator, when this was done, to "conveen the Commission." And, feeling that the business was now practically at an end, the Commission asked the aforesaid Brethren, who knew the amount and nature of his labours, to say how much should be given as "a competent and honest acknowledgement and reward to the young man that has been employed in wrytting of the several copies of the Paraphrase of the Psalmes, corrected from time to time."

The **Commission**, entrusted with Assembly powers, met at Edinburgh on November 20, 1649, when the *sederunt* of twenty-eight ministers and one elder at once entered heartily into the work referred to them by the Assembly. The session of that day was "spent only in the reading and examining the Paraphrase of the Psalmes." The further Minutes briefly say: "Edinb., 21st November 1649, *Post meridiem*—A number of the Psalmes of the new Paraphrase this day surveyed." "Edinb. 22 Novemb.

1649—A number of the Psalmes this session surveyed. *Eodem die post meridiem* :—A number of the Psalmes this day surveyed and examined." "Edinb. 23, Novemb. 1649—The rest of this session spent in reading of the Psalmes. *Eodem die post meridiem*—Sederunt.

Ministers

Mr. Robt. Douglas, *Modr.*	Mr. John Livingston
Mr. George Hutchesone	Mr. James Hamilton
Mr. James Gutterie	Mr. George Leslie
Mr. Robt. Row	Mr. Jon. Neave
Mr. Pat. Gillaspie	Mr. Wm. Row
Mr. John Murray	Mr. George Bennet
Mr. Hugh Mackaell	Mr. Jon. Douglas
Mr. David Layng	Mr. Thomas Lundie
Mr. Mungo Law.	

Elders

Lord Register	L. Ther. Depute
L. Craighall	Quhytbank
L. Brodie	Sr. John Cheishe."

By these seventeen ministers and six elders, whose names are worthy of remembrance, the long labours of examination and revision were brought to an end, and ecclesiastical sanction was given for the use of our **Present Authorised Version** in the following **Act** :—

The Commission of the Generall Assembly having with great diligence considered the Paraphrase of the Psalmes in Meter, sent from the Assembly of Divines in England by our Commissioners, whilst they were there, as it is corrected by former General Assemblies, Committees from them, and now at last by the Brethren deputed by the late Assembly for that purpose : And having exactly examined the same, doe approve the said Paraphrase, as it is now compiled : And therefore according to the power given them by the said Assembly, doe appoint it to be printed and published for publik use : Here by authorizing the same to be the only Paraphrase of the Psalmes of David to be sung in the Kirk of Scotland : and discharging the old Paraphrase and any other than this new Paraphrase, to be made use of in any congregation or family after the

first day of Maij in the year 1650: And for Uniformity in this parte of the Worship of God, doe seriously recommend to Presbyteries to cause make publick intimation of this Act, and take speciall care that the same be tymeously put to execution, and duely observed. A. KERR.

But not yet did this memorable Commission of Assembly feel that they had completed their task. As practical men they gave powers to a Committee for the correct printing, and the fixing of a proper price of the volume, and also for a fair remuneration being paid to "the transcriber of the copies." These powers were embodied in the following resolution:—

The Commission of the Generall Assembly, for the better ordering of the printing of the new Paraphrase of the Psalmes, that they may be correctly printed, and that the people be not extortioned by Printers or Stationers in the prices, doe hereby give power to the Moderator and Ministers of Edinburgh, or any three of them, with the Clerk, to order the printing of the said new Paraphrase, and to sett doune pryces thereof, and to take such course with Printers and Stationers as they may neither wrong the people, nor any of them another. Recommending especially to them to have a care that copies be correctly transcribed for the presse, and that the printed copies be well corrected. Giving them also power to determine and modifie what they think reasonable to give to the transcriber of the copies for all his paines he hes or shall be at.

Only one other step remained to be taken in order to complete the authorisation of this Metrical Version of the Psalms, viz. to get the interposition of the civil authority for its protection and use, and this was accordingly asked by the Commission. There was now no King with his Council to give the requisite civil authority, for Charles I. had been executed in the previous January and Charles II. had not yet "come to his own." But the necessary power was vested in the Committee of Estates, composed of members from the three Estates of the Scottish Parliament—the nobility, barons, and

burgesses :—and the Commission got them to pass the following **Act of the Committee of Estates.**

EDINBURGH, *8th January* 1650.—The Committee of Estates having considered the English Paraphrase of the Psalms of David in Meeter, presented this day unto them by the Commiss. of the General Assembly, together with their Act and the Act of the late Assembly approving the said Paraphrase, and appointing the same to be sung through this Kirk. Therefore the Committee doth also approve the said Paraphrase, and interpone their authority for the publishing and practising thereof: hereby ordaining the same, and no other to be made use of throughout this Kingdom, according to the tenour of the said Acts of the General Assembly and their Commissioners. T. HENDERSON.

Thus, by both ecclesiastical and civil authority the Old Scottish Psalter of 1565, with its great variety of metres and its Conclusions and Prayers, was, after an official existence of eighty-six years, set aside in favour of the simpler and much-revised Version by Rous, whose official existence has lasted for two hundred and fifty-eight years, and is likely to last for many years to come.

The first authorised edition of this last—our present —Version was published under this title :—

The Psalms of David in Meeter: Newly translated, and diligently compared with Original Text and former Translations: More plain, smooth, and agreeable to the Text than any heretofore. Allowed by the authority of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, and appointed to be sung in Congregations and Families. Edinburgh; Printed by Evan Tylor, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1650.

In size it was a small 8vo, pp. 15 and 308. Prefixed to it were the foregoing three Acts of the General Assembly, of the Commission, and of the Committee of Estates. But nowhere does the name of Francis Rous appear.

CHAPTER VII

THE MODERN PSALTER OF 1650

We have now traced the history of our **Present Psalter** from its origin in far-back metrical translations to its culmination in the so-called Rous' Version as adopted by the General Assembly. We say so-called, because, although the first draft on which it was based was that of Rous' edition of 1643, yet that edition was, on the one hand, largely compiled and altered from other psalters then in use,[1] and was, on the other hand, greatly "corrected and amended" by the Westminster Assembly before it appeared as Rous' edition of 1646. Then, again, this edition of 1646 was further "corrected and amended" by the General Assembly before it appeared as Rous' Version of 1650—our **Present Authorised Psalter**. Francis Rous, therefore—were he now alive—would find it difficult to see much, if any, of his handiwork in many of our psalms which go under his name; for some of them would be almost beyond his recognition, through their repeated revisals. Indeed, it would be an intricate and lengthy, albeit an interesting, study to trace from its origin the successive processes of the revision of each particular psalm. Such a minute study is beyond the limits of our present work. But we may take as a single specimen the 23rd Psalm and show how it has been altered.

[1] See p. 69.

PSALM XXIII.

1. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
2. He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.
3. My soul he doth restore again:
and me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.

4. Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear none ill:
For thou art with me: and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.
5. My table thou hast furnished
in presence of my foes:
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.

6. Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

It is to be observed that, of this psalm, the first line is from Zachary Boyd: the lines 3 and 4 in verse 4, and the lines 2, 3, and 4 in verse 5 are from Sir Wm. Mure: the four lines in verse 3, the first line in verse 4, and the four lines in verse 6 are from the Westminster revised edition of 1646; whilst only the words, "He makes me down to lie in pastures green," and the words, "Yet will I fear none ill," appear as they were in Rous' own edition of 1643. The words, "He leadeth me the quiet waters by," and the word "furnished," seem to appear nowhere else than in this version of 1650. The conclusion, therefore, is, that only two and a half lines of Rous' original work, as seen in his edition of 1643, are to be found in the above 23rd Psalm, which popularly goes under his name.

But, whoever were the makers or menders of individual psalms, we look at the volume as a whole and note some of its outstanding features.

1. **Its Metrical Measures.**—These are few, only seven, as compared with the thirty-one in the Old Scottish Psalter. All the one hundred and fifty psalms are in Common Metre. But, of these, there are also thirteen in alternative metres. Five—*i.e.* Psalms xxv. xlv. l. lxvii. and lxx.—are in Short Metre; four —*i.e.* Psalms vi. c. cii. and cxlv.—are in Long Metre; and four—*i.e.* Psalms cxxiv. cxxxvi. cxliii. and cxlviii. —are in Peculiar Metres, of which no two are the same. Of these thirteen psalms, Psalms vi. and c. stand first, and Psalms cii. and cxlv. stand second in the version in Long Metre; Psalms xxv. l. lxvii. and lxx. stand first, and only Psalm xlv. stands second in the version in Short Metre; and Psalms cxxiv. cxxxvi. cxliii. and cxlviii. all stand second in the version in Peculiar Metre. Their positions may have something to do with the source and date of their introduction. Then, as to their authorship, Sternhold is credited with Psalm xxv., Hopkins with Psalm xlv., Kethe with Psalm c., Craig with Psalms cii. cxxxvi. cxliii. and cxlv., Whittingham with Psalm cxxiv., and Pullain with Psalm cxlviii. But in every case there were greater or less alterations on the original text. We have been unable to trace the authorship of Psalms vi. l. lxvii. and lxx.[1]

2. **Its Omissions** as compared with the Old Scottish Psalter. There is no *heading* to each individual psalm to indicate its historic and spiritual meaning, such as this which showed the contents of Psalm xxiii.: "David, having

[1] Mr. W. L. Taylor, Bookseller, Peterhead (who owns a unique collection of over 400 different versions of Metrical Psalm-books published between 1546 and 1890), at the request of the present writer, has also tried, but failed, to discover the authorship of these four Psalms.

tried God's manifold mercies divers times, gathereth assurance that God will continue his goodness for ever." Nor is there in the *margin* of the psalm a quotation from the authorised Prose Version. No doubt, these were simple helps which enabled the common people more intelligently to sing the metrical psalm. Nor are there in the Present Version the *Conclusions* or *Doxologies* which, as we have seen, had become dear to the Scottish people. It seems that the sect of the Brownists or Independents had arisen in Scotland, and had caused dispeace in some places by persuading the people that the *Gloria Patri* savoured of the Romish Mass and the English Prayer-Book, and therefore ought not to be sung. And since these Doxologies or Conclusions could not be justified as being part of the Hebrew Psalter, it was agreed by the Westminster Assembly, and subsequently also by the General Assembly, to give them up. Baillie threw light on the subject by what he wrote on April 25, 1645 :—

> Also about the Conclusion of the Psalme we (the Scottish Commissioners) had no debate with them (the English Divines): with scruple the Independents and all sung it, so far as I know, when it was printed at the end of two or three psalms. But in the new translation of the Psalmes, resolving to keep punctuallie to the original text, without any addition, we and they were content to omitt that whereupon we saw both the Popish and Prelaticall partie did so much dote, as to put it to the end of the most of their lessons and all their psalmes.

3. **Its Intrinsic Merits.**—These are acknowledged to be many and great. It got its final shape from pious and scholarly men who were Hebraists rather than poets. They knew and loved the Bible, and lived in an age when every jot and tittle of it were dear to the heart of all Scottish Protestants. Their chief aim was to make this version of the Psalms at once a simple and faithful paraphrase of the original text. In this aim, according

to all subsequent testimony, they admirably succeeded. Thus, Principal Cunningham says of this version: "Though neither so classical in its language, nor so melodious in its measures, as we would expect from the age which produced a *Paradise Lost* and *L'Allegro*, it is yet so terse, so true to the original, and so natural as to be, upon the whole, the best poetical translation of the psalms of which the English language can boast."[1] Sir Walter Scott says of it: "It, though homely, is plain, forcible and intelligible, and very often possesses a rude sort of majesty which perhaps would be ill exchanged for mere eloquence."[2] And Dr. John Ker finely and more fully gives a similar testimony: "We can claim that no version has ever been made which adheres so closely to the Scripture. It proceeds on the principle of giving every thought in the original, and nothing more; and in this it has succeeded to an extent which is marvellous, and which can be realised only by one who has tested it through careful comparison. It meets with some stones of stumbling and suffers some dislocation of words, by adhering to the line laid down; but there is abundant compensation in the life and energy, the picturesqueness and colour, which it preserves by close contact with the old Hebrew soil. The thought stands out clear, distinct, forceful, not wrapped up in wordy paraphrases where David himself would have had difficulty in recognising his meaning, or liquefied into weak sentimentalisms from which his manly nature, to take no higher view, would have turned away ashamed."[3]

Our *Present Version*, moreover, has proved its fitness by the length and strength of its vitality. No version

[1] *Church Hist. of Scot.*, vol. ii. p. 61.
[2] Letter to Principal Baird.
[3] *Psalms in Hist. and Biog.*, p. 207.

has had so long an existence, if we except the French Psalter, and certainly none has made a home in so many lands. During more than two hundred and fifty years it has poured from the press in countless editions. It has remained all that time the one Common Psalm Book of Scotland. In England, Ireland, the British Colonies, and America, it has securely entrenched itself within the affections of Presbyterian worshippers, many of whom are justly impatient and disappointed with ministers who thrust it too much into the background by the introduction of modern hymns. Everywhere it has become sacred through its familiarity in childhood, manhood, and old age, as well as through its grand and pathetic associations with memorable events in history and biography. Many, therefore, will sympathise with the Scotsman in England who (as told by Sir Walter Scott) used to walk twenty miles to get "a guid sing of the auld Psalms."

CHAPTER VIII

THE MODERN PSALTER IN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

THE tender and hallowed associations which have gathered around the Psalms of David, in prose or verse, would, if all were recorded, form a very bulky volume. But, in accordance with our more restricted plan, we confine ourselves to our own Metrical Version; and we select only a few of its psalms to illustrate how it entered into the Christian experience of many people in the supreme or affecting moments of their life. Some of these dear old psalms were sung by Scottish confessors at their secret conventicles or in their gloomy dungeons; some of them by Scottish martyrs as their souls went up from the stricken field, the ignominious scaffold, or the fiery stake to their home on high; some of them by Scottish saints as they lay on their bed of death; and some of them in Scottish homes when family worship ended the day of toil, or marked the close of an earnest Christian life. It was from this Scottish Psalter that the "Sire" in Burns's *Cotter's Saturday Night*, "waled a portion with judicious care." With what lifelike sweetness the poet has described the homely scene:—

> The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
> They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
> The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
> The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride:

His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
  His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare ;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
  He wales a portion with judicious care ;
And, "Let us worship God," he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise ;
  They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim :
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,
  Or plaintive "Martyrs" worthy of the name ;
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
  The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame ;
  The tickled ear no heart-felt raptures raise ;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The following are a few selected psalms, with illustrative incidents, showing how they touched the Christian experience of different classes of Scottish people :—

Psalm xv.—This is a psalm descriptive of an upright and godly man, who, when he leaves this world, passes into the dwelling-place of the Most High. And in accordance with "an old custom in Scotland that the ransomed of the Lord returned and came to Zion with songs," "Christopher North," in his *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life*, represents it as having been sung at the death-bed of a worthy man who had been a respected elder of the Church :—

Within thy tabernacle, Lord,
  who shall abide with thee ?
And in thy high and holy place
  who shall a dweller be ?
The man that walketh uprightly,
  and worketh righteousness,
And as he thinketh in his heart,
  so doth he truth express, etc.

Psalm xvii.—It was with the last verse of this psalm that a martyr closed his life at Edinburgh

in 1682. He was Alexander Hume of Hume, whose descendants still hold their place in Berwickshire. He was known to be attached to the Presbyterian interest, and to have attended some of the proscribed meetings. Being a man of position and property, it was resolved, through him, to strike terror into the hearts of those of social influence who were inclined to the popular cause. Accordingly his death, which has been characterised as "one of the most cruel judicial murders of the time," was decreed. And it was carried out, in spite of a touching appeal from his wife on behalf of herself and her five children. The sentence inferred and was followed by the forfeiture of his estate, and so they were reduced to great privation until reparation was made at the Revolution. On the scaffold, just before his execution, he sang as his death-song these words :—

> But as for me, I thine own face
> in righteousness will see ;
> And with thy likeness, when I wake,
> I satisfy'd shall be.

"In the parish of Ingliston was a cave which had been a place of safety to not a few of the Covenanters. On April 29, 1685, guided by a traitor, the soldiers were brought to the mouth of the cave, where they seized five of the wanderers who had found refuge in its shelter. John Gibson, who alone was permitted to pray before he was shot, sang part of this psalm, telling his mother and sister that it was 'the joyfullest day of his life.'"[1]

Psalm xx.—The early home of the famous physician, Sir James Simpson, Bart., was one in which there was often a severe struggle in providing daily bread. When his widowed mother was hard pressed she was inclined to be despondent. Then she would sit down and sing

[1] Prothero.

this psalm, and thereafter would rise up refreshed in spirit. And so it came to be known among her children as "Mother's Psalm":—

Jehovah hear thee in the day
when trouble he doth send:
And let the name of Jacob's God
thee from all ill defend.
O let him help send from above,
out of his sanctuary:
From Sion, his own holy hill,
let him give strength to thee.

This also was the psalm which expressed the faith and courage of thirteen miners when they became entombed in a coal-pit near Musselburgh on March 9, 1839. After vainly searching for an exit, and thinking that death was inevitable, they met for religious exercises. They conversed on Scripture truths, and on their hopes for a better world; they talked pathetically of the loved ones whom they were leaving behind, and they sang together this psalm. Little did they then know how prophetic for them (for they were afterwards rescued) was the fifth verse:—

In thy salvation we will joy;
in our God's name we will
Display our banners: and the Lord
thy prayers all fulfil.

Psalm xxi.—At the restoration of Charles II. in 1660 this was the psalm which, as a coronation hymn, the too trustful and too hopeful Presbyterians sang throughout England. How their trust and hopes were belied forms an ugly piece of political and ecclesiastical history. Remembering "the profligacy and the perfidy of the worst of the Stuarts, such a psalm applied to such a monarch," says Dr. Ker, "looks like a hideous parody." Its opening verse is:—

The king in thy great strength, O Lord,
shall very joyful be:
In thy salvation rejoice
how veh'mently shall he!

Psalm xxiii.—Forty-two metrical versions of this psalm, as given by Macmeekan in an Appendix, appeared between the years 1542 and 1773; and others since then have appeared. It has been loved and sung in all ages, and by all classes of people. Children have learned it by heart on their mother's knee; and men and women have carried it in their memory through all their busy days, until they made it a soft pillow whereon to lay their dying head. And even when their own fainting voice failed, has not a smile of hope and joy crept over their face as their minister or some Christian friend put into words the faith of their departing soul by saying:—

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear none ill:
For thou art with me: and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.

It was with the words of this psalm, spoken in broken utterances, that that good, strangely gifted, and eminent man, Edward Irving, passed away on December 7, 1834. The dying hours of that acute thinker, Sir Wm. Hamilton, were consoled by the words, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Most readers will doubtless be able to recall how some part of this psalm was the password of faith with which some loved one left this world and entered on a better.

St. Augustine long ago chose this psalm as the hymn of martyrs; and as such it was sung near the scaffold at Edinburgh in 1681 by two whom Peden calls "honest, worthy lasses." Marion Harvey, aged twenty, a servant girl in Borrowstounness, and Isabel Alison, who had lived privately in Perth until she was apprehended for hearing

Donald Cargill and for refusing the test, were condemned to be hanged. Their crime was fervent devotion to their Presbyterian faith. On the way to the scaffold Bishop Paterson, who had formerly been the Presbyterian minister of Ellon, said, "Marion, you would never hear a curate: now you shall hear one." And he called on one of his clergy to pray. But her heroic rejoinder was, "Come, Isabel, let us sing the 23rd Psalm." Imagine the voice of the curate being drowned by their joyous strains as they sang:—

My table thou hast furnished
in presence of my foes;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.
Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.

Psalm xxiv.—The grand thought of this psalm almost overpoweringly took hold of the father of the celebrated Principal Carstares when assisting at a Communion Service at Calder. "Upon the Sabbath," says Wodrow, "he was wonderfully assisted in his first prayer, and had a strange gale through all the sermon, and there was a remarkable emotion among the hearers. He gave out for singing part of the 24th Psalm":—

He from th' Eternal shall receive
the blessing him upon,
And righteousness, ev'n from the God
of his salvation.
This is the generation
that after him inquire,
O Jacob, who do seek thy face
with their whole heart's desire.

While singing these and the following verses, the narrator says, "he came to the Communion Tables, and

all in the assembly were marvellously affected, glory seeming to fill that house. He served the first table in a kind of rapture, and he called some ministers there to the next, but he was in such a frame that none of them ventured to come and take the work off his hands. He continued at the work with the greatest enlargement and melting, upon himself and all present, that could be, and served fourteen or sixteen tables. A Christian that had been at the table and obliged to come out of the church, pressing to be in again, stood without the door, and said he was rapt in the thought of the glory that was in that house for near half-an-hour, and got leave scarce to think upon any other thing."

Psalm xxv.—A touching story connected with this psalm is related by Wodrow and subsequent writers. It is thus briefly told by Prothero:—"In April 1685, a commission sitting at Wigtown condemned Margaret Maclachan, an elderly widow of sixty, and Margaret Wilson, a girl of eighteen, who refused to abjure the 'Apologetical Declaration.' They were sentenced to be 'tied to stakes fixed within the flood-mark in the Water of Blednoch, near Wigtown, where the sea flows at high water, there to be drowned.' The sentence was carried out on May 11, 1685. . . . Stakes were set in the ooze of the tideway, to which the two women were bound. The elder woman, Margaret Maclachan, was set lower down the river, 'that the younger sufferer might see her struggles, and her course finished, before she herself was reached by the rising sea.' Pitying her youth, the executioners tried to save Margaret Wilson. As the water swirled about her body, she was drawn to the edge of the bank, and offered her life if she would say, 'God save the king,' and take the test. She was ready to say, 'May God save the king, if He will,' for she desired, she said, the salvation of all men: but she would

not forswear her faith, or take the test. So she was once more secured to the stake, and left to her fate. With her fresh young voice, as the salt wave curled above her breast and all but touched her lips, she sang the 25th Psalm," which has this verse in it :—

> My sins and faults of youth
> do thou, O Lord, forget :
> After thy mercy think on me,
> and for thy goodness great.

Psalm xxxi.—With the fifth verse of this psalm, in the original Hebrew, on His lips our Blessed Saviour died on the Cross : and with the same verse, in the prose version—" Into thine hand I commit my spirit : thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth "—a long, long line of His faithful disciples have similarly committed their departing souls into the hands of their God and Saviour. There was one brave young Scottish martyr who, under similar circumstances, sang that verse as it stands in our metrical version.

Hugh M'Kail was licensed to preach when he was scarcely twenty-one, and his last public sermon was delivered in the High Church, Edinburgh, on the Sunday before September 8, 1662—the day on which 400 Presbyterian ministers were driven from their churches in Scotland. In that sermon, speaking of the persecutions of the Church, he said : " She had suffered from an Ahab on the throne, a Haman in the State, and a Judas in the Church." The threefold reference was understood to be to Charles II., the Earl of Middleton, and Archbishop Sharp. The last-named reference was perceived by Sharp and deeply resented. M'Kail, therefore, was a marked man. He had heroically joined in the struggles of the Covenanters in the West of Scotland, and was returning in broken health to his father's house,

when he was taken prisoner at Braid's Craigs, near Edinburgh. After suffering the awful torture of the boot, he was condemned to death. He was then only twenty-six years of age. On December 22, 1662, "about two of the clocks," says the narrative, "he was carried to the scaffold with five others, who suffered with him, where he appeared to the conviction of all that formerly knew him, with a fairer, better, and more staid countenance than ever they had before observed." At the foot of the ladder, leading up to the scaffold, he rapturously addressed the people, and sang part of this psalm, in which occurs this verse :—

> Into thy hand I do commit
> my sp'rit : for thou art he,
> O thou, Jehovah, God of truth,
> who hast redeemed me.

Psalm xxxiii.—Alexander Peden—the Prophet of the Covenant—had a career of hair-breadth escapes. His companions were one by one killed or captured, but he seemed to have a charmed life. Ejected from his Galloway parish in 1663 : outlawed for his complicity in the Pentland Rising : imprisoned on the Bass Rock from 1673 to 1677 : condemned to banishment in Virginia and conveyed on the outward voyage as far as London, where, for some unknown reason, he was liberated, he spent his remaining years in Ireland or Scotland—as he himself says, "in going from one bloody land to another bloody land." Dogged by spies, and hunted by dragoons, he fearlessly continued his ministrations to the harassed and scattered Covenanters, and yet he died in his bed on January 28, 1686. In all his wanderings and escapes the psalms were to him a perennial source of strength. It is told of him that one Sunday night, after he had "preached in a shield or sheep-house in a

desert-place, he and those that were with him lay down in the sheep-house and got some sleep. He rose early and went up to the burn-side, and stayed long. When he came in he did sing to them the 32nd Psalm from the seventh verse to the end; when ended he repeated the eighth verse:—

7. Thou art my hiding-place, thou shalt
from trouble keep me free:
Thou with songs of deliverance
about shalt compass me.
8. I will instruct thee, and thee teach
the way that thou shalt go;
And, with mine eye upon thee set,
I will direction show—

saying, 'These and the following are sweet lines, which I got at the burn-side this morning, and we'll get more to-morrow, and so we'll get daily provision.'"

Psalm xxxiv.—Part of this psalm was sung by two humble countrymen from Galloway, named Andrew Sword and John Clyde, at the place of execution in Edinburgh in 1679. They had been tried and condemned for being at Bothwell, and in penalty for the death of Archbishop Sharp, although neither of them had ever seen him. One of them, in his dying testimony, called himself "a poor ploughman lad." At the foot of the ladder these two brave martyrs sang:—

This poor man cry'd, God heard, and sav'd
him from all his distresses.
The angel of the Lord encamps,
and round encompasseth
All those about that do him fear,
and them delivereth.

Psalm xlii.—Daniel M'Michael, one of the persecuted Covenanters, was surprised and taken by the troopers from a place of concealment in Nithsdale on January 1,

1685. He was led away to a field to be shot; and, on being told to prepare for death, he calmly said, "If my life must go for His cause, I am willing: God will prepare me." He was shot in the presence of some of his relatives, whilst singing part of this psalm :—

His loving-kindness yet the Lord
command will in the day,
His song's with me by night; to God,
by whom I live, I'll pray.

Psalm xliii. — When the memorable "Disruption" took place in May 1843, and the seceding ministers and elders met in Tanfield Hall, Edinburgh, to constitute the first Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, Dr. Thomas Chalmers was chosen as its Moderator. On his taking the Chair he selected for an act of praise this psalm from the third verse :—

O send thy light forth and thy truth;
let them be guides to me,
And bring me to thine holy hill,
ev'n where thy dwellings be.

"As the vast multitude," says his biographer, "stood up to sing these words, and as the swell of 3000 voices rose up in melody to heaven, a sudden burst of sunlight filled the building, and there were some who thought of Dr. Chalmers' text but six months before—'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.'"

Psalm xlvi. — When the Covenanters of Scotland, like the Huguenots of France, were in trouble, they used often to say, "Come, let us sing the 46th Psalm" :—

God is our refuge and our strength,
in straits a present aid;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
we will not be afraid.

Psalm lx.—Robert Douglass gave out this psalm

to be sung when he preached the Coronation Sermon of Charles II. at Scone on January 1, 1651, the Marquis of Argyle putting the crown on the ungrateful monarch, who afterwards sent him to the block.

When Ebenezer Erskine in 1740 felt it to be his duty to leave the Church of Scotland and form the Secession Church, "he took his place," says Dr. Ker, "with an immense multitude below the battlements of Stirling Castle, and sang the first five verses of this psalm. Looking down on the field where the heroic Wallace gained a decisive victory, the words have in them the ring of battle." The psalm opens with the line, "O Lord, thou hast rejected us"; and the fourth and fifth verses are:—

> And yet a banner thou hast giv'n
> to them who thee do fear;
> That it by them, because of truth,
> displayed may appear.
>
> That thy beloved people may
> deliver'd be from thrall,
> Save with the power of thy right hand,
> and hear me when I call.

Psalm lxxiv.—On a memorable occasion in November 1666 this psalm gave voice to the cry of a gallant but despairing company of Covenanters at Rullion Green. They had come, indifferently armed, to present a remonstrance at Edinburgh. Driven back and reduced in numbers to 900, they were attacked by 3000 disciplined soldiers under the fierce Dalziel. Though worn out by struggling through snow-drifts, spent with hunger and fatigue, and disappointed of help from the Lothians, they chanted their despairing appeal to God:—

> O God, why hast thou cast us off?
> is it for evermore?
> Against thy pasture-sheep why doth
> thine anger smoke so sore?—

and met and defeated a charge of the enemy's horse. But after a long, hard fight they were finally overcome. Of the prisoners taken, some were executed, some were imprisoned, and some were shipped off to the plantations.

Psalm lxxvi.—By the year 1679 the struggle between the Covenanters and the Government had become very determined. Those who dared to meet for worship elsewhere than in the churches sanctioned by the Government were given over to martial law, were frequently shot in the fields or on the moors without trial, and their bodies were left where they fell. This was the period which, in the words of Renwick, "flowered the mosses with martyrs." One of the proscribed field-conventicles was held on June 1, 1679, at Drumclog. Claverhouse heard of it and appeared with his troopers to break it up. The sentry at his post gave the alarm by the discharge of his musket, and at once the armed men of the congregation rushed forth to meet the dragoons. And as they marched down the hill, they raised the challenge to their foe in the inspiring words of the 76th Psalm, which they sang to the tune "Martyrs":—

> In Judah's land God is well known,
> his name's in Israel great:
> In Salem is his tabernacle,
> in Sion is his seat.

Their challenge was vindicated. The action was severe, but it resulted in the defeat of the dragoons. Even Claverhouse himself had difficulty in escaping unscathed.

Psalm lxxxiv.—Thomas Halyburton was a Professor of Divinity in St. Andrews, and died in 1712 at the early age of thirty-eight, leaving behind him a well-known name in Scotland. When dying he caused his friends to read this psalm, and to sing the latter part of it, beginning with the eighth verse:—

Lord God of hosts, my prayer hear ;
O Jacob's God, give ear.
See God our shield, look on the face
of thine anointed dear.

He joined in the singing, and after prayer said, "I had always a mistuned voice, a bad ear, but, which is worst of all, a mistuned heart. But, shortly, when I join the temple service above, there shall not be, world without end, one string of the affections out of tune."

Psalm c.—In the long history of this grand old psalm — "All people that on earth do dwell," — how many are the great occasions on which it has been sung by immense gatherings, some of which must recur to the memory of every reader ! Shakespeare mentions it in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, when (Act II. Scene 1) he represents a Mrs. Ford as saying that the 100th Psalm would not go to the tune of "Green Sleeves,"—a song of the day, popular but very free in character. But it did go, even then, to the fine, stately tune to which we still sing it.

Psalm ciii. — To many people in our Presbyterian Churches the celebration of the Holy Communion would scarcely be like itself were a portion of this psalm not sung to the tune either of "Coleshill" or of "London New"—

O thou my soul, bless God the Lord ; etc.

James Renwick was the last martyr in the long twenty-eight years of persecution during which Scotland was struggling and suffering for the cause of religious freedom. He was a young minister, only twenty-six years of age, when, on February 17, 1688, he was executed in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh. In his last testimony he said, "I die a Presbyterian Protestant." More than once his words were drowned by drums, but on the

scaffold he sang part of this psalm. From one so young in years, there is a touching tone in the words :—

> Such pity as a father hath
> unto his children dear ;
> Like pity shews the Lord to such
> as worship him in fear.

"And then," says Dr. Ker, "as if he felt the breath of the coming deliverance to himself and his country already blowing on his dying cheek, came the words of joyful trust :—

> But unto them that do him fear
> God's mercy never ends ;
> And to their children's children still
> his righteousness extends."

Psalm cvii.—In former times it was a not uncommon custom in Scotland to have family worship immediately after a death, and on such an occasion this psalm—and particularly the portion of it including verses 29 and 30 —was often sung. Thus, when the father of the late Principal Cairns died on January 3, 1841, the young brother of the latter describes what took place as follows : "When the end came, and each had truly realised what had happened, our mother in a broken voice asked that 'the Books' might be laid on the table ; then she gave out that verse in the 107th Psalm :—

> The storm is changed into a calm, etc.

It was her voice, too, that raised the tune. Then she asked Thomas to read a chapter in the Bible, and afterwards to pray. We all knelt down, and Thomas made a strong effort to steady his voice ; but he failed utterly. Then the dear mother herself lifted the voice of thanksgiving for the victory that had been won, and after that the neighbours were called in." That was what took place in a Seceder family.

Thomas Carlyle had, in his early days, a Seceder training; and it may be that a vague memory of this pious custom came back to him when he was ending his great book, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, and moved him to write, in reference to the grief of Oliver's daughter, these closing words: "Husht, poor weeping Mary! Here is a life-battle right nobly done. Seest not thou—

The storm is changed into a calm
At his command and will;
So that the waves, which raged before,
Now quiet are and still.
Then are *they* glad,—because at rest
And quiet now they be;
So to the haven he them brings
Which they desired to see."

Psalm cxviii.—Donald Cargill, leader of the Covenanters after the death of Richard Cameron, sang part of this psalm at his execution in the Grassmarket on July 27, 1681. He was interrupted by the beating of drums, and could repeat only three verses, 16-18, which he used often to quote during his life:—

The right hand of the mighty Lord
exalted is on high;
The right hand of the mighty Lord
doth ever valiantly.
I shall not die, but live, and shall
the works of God discover.
The Lord hath me chastised sore,
but not to death giv'n over.

When William of Orange landed at Torbay in 1688, he asked Carstares to conduct a service. This was the psalm sung, in which, we are told, "the troops all along the beach joined: and this act of devotion produced a sensible effect." They hailed the Prince as their

deliverer from the tyranny of the Stuarts; and so they heartily sang—

Blessed is he in God's great name
that cometh us to save:
We, from the house which to the Lord
pertains, you blessed have.

Psalm cxxii.—It is now a well-established custom to close the last sitting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland by singing verses 6-9 of this psalm. And there are few things more inspiring and affecting than—after the Moderator has given a reminiscent, wise, and stimulating farewell address, and after the Lord High Commissioner, as representing the king, has spoken a few courtly and encouraging words—to hear the vast assembly, often in one of the quiet hours after midnight, sing almost in complete unison to the noble strains of "St. Paul's"—

Pray that Jerusalem may have
peace and felicity:
Let them that love thee and thy peace
have still prosperity.

Therefore I wish that peace may still
within thy walls remain,
And ever may thy palaces
prosperity retain.

Now, for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
peace be in thee, I'll say.
And for the house of God our Lord,
I'll seek thy good alway.

CHAPTER IX

TRANSLATIONS AND REVISIONS OF MODERN PSALTER

1. Gaelic Translations

When the Modern Version of the Psalter had come into use in 1650, it was but natural that the Gaelic-speaking Presbyterians of Scotland should desire to have a translation of it which they could sing in their own tongue. For they have ever felt that Divine worship can never be so fervently offered as in the flowery rhetoric and glowing eloquence of their own Gaelic language. It was not long therefore until Gaelic translations began to appear.

1. The first *complete* Gaelic translation was in 1684, and was the work of Robert Kirk, minister at Balquhidder. So fearful was he that he should be anticipated by another edition which it was the intention of the Synod of Argyle to prepare and publish, that, we are told, he sat up the greater part of the night for many months, working at the translation, and had recourse to some curious devices in the use of cold water to keep himself awake, or to waken himself early in the morning. In this way he achieved the honour of priority. He died in 1692. His book is now extremely rare.

2. The next complete Gaelic translation was that of the Synod of Argyle. The Synod had, in 1659, issued an incomplete edition of fifty psalms; but in 1694 it

had completed the translation of the remaining hundred psalms. For this edition, it obtained, in the same year, a restricted authorisation from the General Assembly in the following enactment: "The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration that there is a complete paraphrase of the whole Psalms in Irish metre, approven and emitted by the Synod of Argyle, who understand the Irish language . . . and the General Assembly, understanding that in some parts of the National Church, where preaching and prayer are used in Irish, the Psalms are sung at the same diet in a different language, whereby an uniformity in the worship of God is marred, and many of the people deprived of the benefit of praising God in a known tongue: Therefore, as the General Assembly doth hereby appoint that this incongruous way of worship shall be hereafter forborne, so they do recommend to all congregations and families who worship God in the Irish language, to make use of the said paraphrase therein." *Gaelic* and *Irish* were, in those days, interchangeable words; and English to many Highlanders was not a "known tongue."

3. An amended and altered edition of the Argyle translation was issued in 1753. It was by Alexander Macfarlane, M.A., minister of Kilmelfort and Kilninver. By the desire of the Synod he undertook the work. The improvement he effected on the version was by excluding many of the "Irishisms" and by converting it "to Albanic Gaelic for the general welfare of the Gaeldom of Scotland." Its popularity was greater in the North Highlands than in the West Highlands.

4. A further improved edition of the Argyle translation appeared in 1787. In this case also it was at the request of the Synod that the work was done by Dr. John Smith, minister of the First Charge of Campbel-

town. He was eminent as an antiquarian and Celtic scholar. He died in 1807 at the age of sixty. This translation, which excluded North-country words and some remaining "Irishisms," and adapted itself in metre to the West-country dialect, enjoyed a long popularity.

5. The Argyle translation was further amended by Thomas Ross, M.A., and was published in 1807. It was but a slightly altered edition of Macfarlane's version. It commended itself chiefly to the North Highlands. Ross is described as "a gifted and able scholar, and of high literary tastes and habits." He was minister of one of the Scottish churches in Holland until the French invasion of that country, in the end of the eighteenth century, when he returned to Scotland and became the minister of the parish of Lochbroom.

6. None of the foregoing five Gaelic translations had received the **full and definite authority** of the General Assembly. This honour was reserved for the one which appeared in 1826, bearing, as rendered into English, the following title :—

The Psalms of David, along with the Hymns drawn from the holy Scriptures, to be sung in the worship of God. Improved and published by authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at the command and expense of the Honourable Society for propagating Christian Knowledge through Gaeldom and the Islands of Scotland. Edinburgh : Printed by Duncan Stevenson, 1826.

This is the edition of the metrical psalms which is still used by the Gaelic-speaking Presbyterians of Scotland. The presumed ignorance of the Gaelic language in the case of most of his readers, and the acknowledged ignorance of the writer himself, form an adequate excuse for not giving specimens of these psalms.

2. Proposed New English Translation

The *Paraphrases*, in their final polished form, appeared in 1781, and threw into unfavourable contrast the less elegant measures of the *Psalms*. Even before that date, the defects of the latter were recognised, but a proposal for amendment was deprecated. Dr. Beattie, the author of "The Minstrel," writing in 1778 to Dr. Hugh Blair, said: "The numbers in this version are often harsh and incorrect, there are frequent obscurities and some ambiguities in the style: the Scotch idiom occurs in several places: and the old Scotch pronunciation is sometimes necessary to make out the rhyme. Yet in this version there is a manly, though severe, simplicity, without any affected refinement: and there are many passages so beautiful as to stand in no need of emendation."

Thirty years later there sprang up a strong desire for an improvement of the psalmody of the Church. And there was a desire, also, on the part of some, for a new translation of the psalms. The General Assembly, therefore, in 1807, appointed a Committee to deal with the subject. The Convener was the Rev. Alexander Brunton, D.D., minister of the Tron Church, Edinburgh. The work entrusted to the Committee seems to have been twofold—the enlargement of the collection of paraphrases, and an improved version of the psalms. In reference to the former Dr. Brunton wrote to several poets, including Crabbe and Sir Walter Scott, soliciting their aid in the enterprise. Crabbe, a clergyman of the Church of England, did not at once answer him, but wrote a letter of inquiry in 1812 to Scott: "Know you, Sir, a gentleman in Edinburgh, A. Brunton (the Rev.), who dates St. John Street, and who asks my assistance in furnishing hymns which have relation to the Old and New Testament—anything which would suit the purpose

of those who are cooking up a book of Scotch Psalmody?" Scott's answer was immediate, and in a more serious and respectful strain: "I think those hymns which do not immediately recall the warm and exalted language of the Bible are apt to be, however elegant, rather cold and flat for the purposes of devotion." And he stated, further, that he approved of "that solemnity and peculiarity of diction which at once puts the reader and hearer upon his guard as to the purpose of the poetry." No practical results seem to have come from the labours of this Committee, which continued to be reappointed yearly until 1822.

The subject was again taken up in 1827, when the General Assembly appointed another Committee, consisting of "Dr. Baird (Convener), Dr. A. Brown, Dr. David Ritchie, Mr. Lundie, Mr. Charles M'Combie at Lumphanan, Dr. A. Thomson, Professor Ferrie, Dr. Chalmers, and Robert Paul, Esq.," "for the purpose of enlarging the collection of Translations and Paraphrases from Sacred Scriptures, and *otherwise improving the Psalmody*." The latter words, which we have put in *italics*, show that a new translation or an improvement of the metrical Psalms may have been in the mind of the Assembly, as it was undoubtedly in the minds of at least some members of the Committee. This is implied in the answers which they got to letters addressed to certain poets, and especially in one which came from Sir Walter Scott.

The reply of Sir Walter is a lengthy one. It is contained in a letter dated "Edinburgh, 26 June 1827." He gives several reasons against making a new translation. The first is the "almost insuperable difficulty" of translating the oriental dress of Hebrew poetry into English verse. The second is "the daring and difficult task" of adding "mere graces of style to poetry produced by an afflatus of divinity." He then goes on to say:—

A third reason, and a very strong one, will, I hope, induce the Kirk of Scotland to be very cautious of laying aside or even undervaluing their own ancient translation of the psalms. It is in some cases, perhaps, bald and rude considered as a rhythmical composition, but I am very doubtful whether even the rudeness of its literal simplicity does not make it more fit for the purposes of devotion than the affectation of a more ornate version. . . . But there is still another argument in favour of the old psalmody, and it is with me a decisive one. . . . The psalms of the old version are those used by the fathers of our Church to express their sorrows and their triumphs, their hopes and fears, their prayers in danger and their gratitude for deliverances. This ought to make them invaluable, and with my consent not a line of them should be altered. . . . I hope, therefore, the zeal of the General Assembly will pause before they alter the public worship in such an essential point, and if they do not, I will venture to prophesy that, making the best exertions they can and getting the best assistance, they will not produce a version superior to that now in use, in a different degree than Tate and Brady are superior to Sternhold and Hopkins. And in order to gain this very questionable advantage they will break a hundred devotional associations with which men's minds are invincibly bound to the present version. . . . It is now seven years since I had some communication with my friend, Dr. Baird, upon the subject, and expressed to him at the same time my sentiments upon a general retranslation of the psalms, and my determination, on principle, to have nothing to do personally with an undertaking which, though excellently intended, carries in it, I think, much danger to the National Church.[1]

Sir Walter Scott wrote also in a similar strain to Principal Baird, and he added these words:—"I have an old-fashioned taste in sacred as well as profane poetry; I cannot help preferring even Sternhold and Hopkins to Tate and Brady, and our own metrical version of the

[1] This letter, printed in full, will be found in *Life and Work* Magazine for February 1884. It was addressed to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chas. M'Combie, then a young man, aged twenty-two, fresh from literary work in London, where he made some notable literary acquaintances. He wrote on the subject to Sir Walter Scott, Dean Milman, Thomas Campbell, and Thomas Moore. Their replies are extant, and are in the possession of his son-in-law, the present writer,

Psalms to both. I hope, therefore, they will be touched with a lenient hand." On these views of the celebrated poet being communicated to the General Assembly, Dr. Thomas Chalmers said :—

> I entirely coincide in the opinion so well expressed in the letter of Sir Walter Scott, which at once combines high poetical feeling with humble piety. I consider our metrical version to have a charm peculiar to itself; besides, these psalms were deeply identified and incorporated with the feelings of the people, who would consider it sacrilege to make any alteration on them . . . The present version of the Psalms are interwoven with the sentiments and devotional ideas of the people in humble life to an extent that, even though better poetry were introduced, an alteration would inflict a wound on the feelings of many of the best men in our land, that no new version, however superior, could atone for.

This was the last serious attempt in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to set aside the Modern Psalter of 1650 in favour of a new English Translation. And the year 1828 chronicled its failure.

3. Recent Revised Versions

The arguments against what Sir Walter Scott called "a general retranslation of the psalms" are undoubtedly strong and almost unanswerable. But the same weighty reasons cannot be urged against **Revision**, especially if it were done "with a lenient hand." There has, at any rate, been long a growing feeling in favour of such an enterprise.

Dr. David Laing, notwithstanding his antiquarian tastes, hints, even when praising the Version, at the desirability of removing defects. "The changes that have taken place in accent and pronunciation, make it frequently liable to a charge of want of prosody. Still, with all its poverty of style, and manifest imperfections, it must be admitted that long familiar use has given it

a firm hold on the affections of the people of Scotland; and much as it might be improved if carefully revised (for the sake of metre) by some skilful and judicious hand, and enlarged by adding particular psalms in different measures to lessen its present monotonous character, the Version itself to all appearance will not speedily be superseded."[1]

Principal Cunningham says: "Without being discarded, it might be amended. There are many verses which unfortunately offend both rhyme and reason, and give to every person of taste a mean idea of the lyric gifts of the Hebrew bards. These might be remodelled without wounding even the prejudices of those who love what is consecrated by time; and our piety would henceforth catch fresh force from the power of poesy, instead of being shocked, as it frequently is, by inanity and bad taste."[2]

Dr. John Ker closes his book, *The Psalms in History and Biography*, by expressing the wish "that the Presbyterian Church should take the Old Psalter into its hand, reverently and kindly, and touching it here and there, give us something to sing, full of the past and yet fitted for the present."

This work of revision has not, since 1828, been undertaken by the Church of Scotland. But it has been undertaken by two other Churches, viz. by what was formerly the Free Church of Scotland, and by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Free Church Version.—Early in the latter half of last century, the General Assembly of the Free Church, feeling its need of a greater variety in the musical part of public worship, appointed a Committee to consider the question. In accordance with this remit, after the labours

[1] *Baillie's Letters and Journals*, vol. iii. p. 550.
[2] *Church History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 429.

of several years, a "revised collection of psalm versions, paraphrases, and hymns" was in 1872 submitted to the Assembly, which thereupon passed the following resolution: —"The Assembly having received and considered the revised Collection of psalm versions, paraphrases, and hymns . . . allow the public use of said Collection where that is judged to be for edification." It may be observed that this resolution is couched in similar terms to that which, in 1781, authorised our use of the Paraphrases.[1]

This Revised Collection, which did not come into general use and is now almost forgotten, contained new renderings as alternative forms of forty psalms. We give as a specimen Psalm lxxxiv. verses 1, 3, and 4, which may be compared with the corresponding verses of the same psalm in our Modern Psalter, and also in Watts' hymn in the same metre, as it may be found in the *Church Hymnary*, No. 378, or in the *Scottish Hymnal*, No. 129.

PSALM LXXXIV. (*Free Church Version*)

1. How lovely are thy tents,
   O Lord of hosts, to me!
   My spirit longs, yea faints
   The Lord's own courts to see.
   To his abode
   My heart aspires;
   My flesh desires
   The living God.

3. O happy they that be
   Within thy house always:
   For there they wait on thee,
   And ever give thee praise.
   Yea, happy they
   Whose strength thou art,
   And in whose heart
   Is found thy way.

[1] See p. 149.

4. Who passing Baca's vale,
Therein do dig a well:
The rain shall never fail
The water-pools to fill.
From strength to strength
They go until
To Zion hill
They come at length.

Irish Presbyterian Version.—Towards the close of the last century the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, like the Free Church of Scotland, desired to have some improvement in its psalmody. Hymns were not, as yet, allowed to be used in public worship,[1] and some of its congregations did not think it right to sing the Paraphrases. In these circumstances the Irish General Assembly appointed a Committee to revise the Scottish Metrical Version of the Psalms, and, ultimately accepting the fruit of their labours, sanctioned *The Psalter*,[2] which was published in 1898. In the Preface, the Committee say that they made an attempt "to remove blemishes by emendations of those portions where there are erroneous renderings, errors of syntax, faulty rhymes, obsolete words, or want of correspondence between the rhythm of sense and the rhythm of sound." To meet this "want of correspondence," they provided twenty-seven additional *Second Version* Psalms in different measures, which, as they say, "give a little more variety of metre than is to be found in the Scottish Version."

To the removal of the more verbal "blemishes" the Committee addressed themselves with tender care, and, as some think, with good success. Those "blemishes,"

[1] *The Church Hymnary* has since been sanctioned.
[2] See p. 193

as we have seen,[1] were recognised long ago by Beattie, Scott, Laing, and others; and it is interesting to see how this Committee have, as they profess, "very tenderly dealt" with them. We therefore give a few illustrations of their alterations.

In the Modern Psalter, Ps. iii. v. 7 is:

> Arise, O Lord; save me, my God;
> for thou my foes hast stroke
> All on the cheek-bone, and the teeth
> of wicked men hast broke.

But in this Revised Version it is:

> Arise, O Lord; save me, my God;
> For thou hast struck my foes
> Upon the cheek; the wicked's teeth
> Hast broken by thy blows.

In the Modern Psalter, Ps. civ. v. 12 is:

> By them the fowls of heav'n shall have
> their habitation,
> Which do among the branches sing
> with delectation.

But in this Revised Version it is:

> The birds of heaven their dwelling make
> Where these do flow along,
> And from among the leafy boughs
> With joy give forth their song.

A line so awkward to say or sing as "When me your fathers tempt'd and prov'd," Ps. xcv. v. 9, is made euphonious by simply dropping out the "and":—

> When me your fathers tempted, proved,
> And did my working see.

These examples may suffice to show with what a

[1] See pp. 124, 126, 127, 128.

skilful and "lenient hand" many of the acknowledged "blemishes" have been removed.

The twenty-seven "Additional Psalm-Versions" certainly enrich the Psalter. Not only do they supply the "want of correspondence," but also they are worthy from a poetical point of view. The names of their authors are not stated. We give as specimens a few portions of several psalms in different metres:—

PSALM XIX. (*Second Version*)

1. The lofty heavens proclaim
The majesty of God;
The firmament displays
His handiwork abroad;
Day unto day doth utter speech,
And night to night doth knowledge teach.

2. Aloud they do not speak,
They utter forth no word,
Nor into language break;
Yet is their witness heard;
Their line through all the earth extends,
Their words to earth's remotest ends.

PSALM XXIX. (*Second Version*)

1. Give ye to Jehovah, O sons of the mighty,
Give ye to Jehovah the glory and power;
Give ye to Jehovah the honour and glory;
In beauty of holiness kneel and adore.
2. The voice of Jehovah comes down on the waters;
In thunder the God of the glory draws nigh;
Lo, over the waves of the wide flowing waters
Jehovah as King is enthronèd on high.

PSALM XXXIX. (*Second Version*)

4. Teach me, Lord, the number meting
Of my days, how brief it is;
Make me see and know how fleeting,
Vain and sad a life is this.

5. Life a span is at the longest;
Mine is nothing, Lord, to thee;
In his best estate and strongest
Man is only vanity.
. . . . . .
10. See my tears, regard my danger;
Be not deaf unto my prayer:
For a sojourner and a stranger
Am I, as my fathers were.
11. Spare me, yet a little spare me,
To recover strength, before
Thy dread summons hence shall bear me,
To be seen on earth no more.

PSALM CXLIX. (*Second Version*)

1. O praise ye the Lord!
Prepare your glad voice,
New songs with his saints
Assembled to sing;
Before his Creator
Let Israel rejoice,
And children of Zion
Be glad in their King.

But, however good this revision of the Scottish Metrical Psalter may be, it is a pity that it was undertaken and sanctioned by only a section of British Presbyterianism. Since all the other Presbyterian Churches in Britain and also (it is believed) in the Colonies use the Scottish Psalter, the ideal thing would be, if a Revised Version is desirable, that all these Churches should take common action in the matter.

In such common action, the Presbyterian Churches of the **United States of America** could scarcely be expected to join. They have, as regards the Psalms, their own peculiar associations and usages. An esteemed friend in New York[1] has kindly communicated the following interesting information:—

[1] Rev. James Dennis, D.D.

I have made inquiries as to the usage of our Presbyterian Churches in America in regard to the Psalms, especially as to what is the custom in those Churches which use the Psalms exclusively in public worship. As regards our Churches in general, the Psalms are interspersed with the hymns, and the particular version is not selected from any one source, but may be from the older versions, or may have been written by individuals connected with any of the denominations.

The Churches which confine themselves to the Psalms in public worship seem to have no uniform system, but in some instances (I mean in the case of individual congregations) they use what is popularly known as Rouse's Version exclusively. Other congregations adopt a slightly revised version, containing some entirely new renderings of particular Psalms. I understand that a Committee, appointed by the Synod, has in course of preparation a book containing a selection from the Scottish Version, and from another version recently prepared by representatives of different branches of the Presbyterian Church. It seems probable that when this new version is issued it will be adopted for uniform use. It seems likely that this volume will contain the best renderings to be found in the various Versions, both old and new.

Will the Church of Scotland—the revered mother of them all—ever think it right to invite representatives of her scattered children, at home and abroad, to join with her in such a revision, with a "lenient hand," as will cause to be still loved and used, for many more years to come, the Scottish Psalter of 1650?

BOOK II.—THE PARAPHRASES

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY—SPIRITUAL SONGS

The metrical psalms were not exclusively used in public worship in Scotland for any lengthened period prior to 1650. There were also used what were called "Scriptural Songs" and "Spiritual Songs." If a distinction can be drawn between these two, then the former were metrical renderings of portions of Scripture other than the psalms and were somewhat akin to our modern paraphrases; while the latter were poetical pieces of a more general character, and were somewhat akin to our modern hymns. Both Scriptural and Spiritual Songs appeared, intermingled with psalms, in Wedderburn's *Gude and Godlie Ballates*, and also, in an ever-increasing number, in successive editions of the Old English Psalter, until there were twenty-five of them.

The Old Scottish Psalter of 1565 appeared at first without any of these songs. They began to appear in the edition of 1575; and in the edition of 1634 they were increased to fourteen—their maximum number in this Psalter. They were entitled:—(1) The Ten Commandments; (2) A Prayer; (3) The Lord's Prayer; (4) Veni Creator; (5) The Song of Simeon; (6) The XII. Articles of Christian Belief; (7) The Humble Suit of a Sinner;

(8) The Lamentation of a Sinner; (9) The Complaint of a Sinner; (10) The Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary; (11) The Lamentation; (12) The Song of Moses; (13) A Thanksgiving after receiving the Lord's Supper; (14) A Spiritual Song. Unlike the psalms, which were a concise and close rendering of the original, these fourteen songs were very diffuse in their composition, extending in all to 954 lines. Moreover, they were by different authors known or unknown. They were of varying, but in no case of high literary merit; and they were set to particular tunes. Whether intended to be sung or merely committed to memory, they were "fitted to afford wholesome religious instruction, which was probably the chief end they were intended to serve."[1] But their use came to an end when the Old Scottish Psalter was set aside.

The General Assembly does not seem to have intended the final exclusion of such Spiritual Songs, for in the same Act — August 28, 1647 — which authorised the revision of Rous' Psalms, it was recommended

> that Mr. Zachary Boyd be at the paines to translate the other Scripturall Songs in meeter, and to report his travels also to the Commission of Assembly, that after their examination thereof, they may send the same to Presbyteries to be there considered until the next General Assemblie.

Zachary Boyd, as we have seen, was a religious poet of some distinction in his day, and was the author of several volumes of Spiritual Songs; but it does not appear that he ever reported "his travels" to the Commission. Again, when the General Assembly, on August 10, 1648, sent down to Presbyteries "Rous' Paraphrase of the Psalms, with the corrections thereof," it instructed "Master John Adamson and Mr. Thomas

[1] Livingstone, p. 35.

Crawford to revise the labours of Mr. Zachary Boyd upon the other Scripturall Songs," and to report through the Commission to the next General Assembly. But neither does this small committee of two seem to have given in a report on "the labours of Mr. Zachary Boyd." So none of his Spiritual Songs came to have a place in the Psalmody of the Church.

David Leitch was another who, in this connection, nearly had his name placed on the scroll of fame. He was minister of Ellon from 1638 to 1648. He had previously been a Professor and Sub-Principal in King's College, Aberdeen. In an account of the "Learned Men and Writers of Aberdeen," it is said of him that "he wrote several learned poems." On April 9, 1635, he pronounced a funeral oration on the death of Bishop Patrick Forbes, which was published, as was also, in 1637, an academical oration, "Philosophia Illachrymans." It can be gathered from the local Presbytery Records that once during his ministry he fled from Ellon into England to avoid joining the party of the Covenant, that he returned and submitted himself to his Presbytery, and that his offence was condoned on his signing the Covenant. This episode in his history may have had something to do with a letter which the General Assembly caused to be written concerning him. He was in Edinburgh attending its meetings in February 1648, when it desired "Mr. John Adamsone to revise Mr. David Leitch's papers of Poecie, and give his opinion to the Commission thereof." And on April 5, 1648, the Assembly sent this letter to the Presbytery of Ellon:—

Right Reverend and well-beloved Brethren. These are to show you that our brother Mr. David Leitch, being employed in paraphrasing the songs of the old and new Testament, has been in this town for some time, and forasmuch as he yet is appointed to continue in that employment, our earnest desire is, that you

endeavour yourselves jointly, for his further encouragement in that work, providing that it be no hindrance to him in his present charge. So recommending you and your labours to the blessing of God, we rest, Your loving Brethren, etc.

Had it not been for this letter his Presbytery might have misunderstood the reason of his delay in returning to his parish. Indeed, it is doubtful whether he ever did return. He went, it seems, this very year with the Scottish Army into England and became one of the Chaplains of Charles II. In 1649 a successor to him was appointed in Ellon. His departure into England may account for the fact that there is no further mention of his "Poecie" in the records of the General Assembly. On the failure of the Royal cause, to which he seems all his life to have been sincerely, if sometimes secretly, attached, he returned to Aberdeenshire and became minister of Kemnay. He was the author of a volume of Latin Poems entitled *Parerga*, published in London in 1657. None of his poetical labours, however, found a place in the Psalmody of the Church.

Robert Lowrie was another whom the Commission of Assembly, on February 22, 1650, recognised as having "taken some paines in putting the Scriptural Songs in Meter"; he also was desired "to present his labours to the Commission at their next meeting." But there is no record of his having done so. He had been a minister in Perth, but in 1644 was translated to Edinburgh; and when Episcopacy was restored in 1660, he was the only one of the city ministers who conformed. He was therefore nicknamed "The Nest Egg." He subsequently became Dean of the Diocese of Edinburgh, and in 1672 Bishop of Brechin. He died in 1677.

The General Assembly, in 1649, had become impatient at the delay in producing the new Psalter; and therefore, without waiting for the slow process of

revising "Scriptural Songs" and sending them also down for the consideration of Presbyteries, it empowered, as we have seen, the Commission to finally revise and issue the Psalter of 1650. It doubtless intended that in subsequent editions, as in the Old Scottish Psalter, carefully revised Spiritual Songs should authoritatively appear. But the General Assembly itself was soon to be discontinued. It met at Edinburgh in July 1653, but was forcibly dispersed by the orders of Oliver Cromwell—dispersed "to meet no more for many sad years." Independency suppressed it, and Episcopacy kept it suppressed. Not till November 16, 1690—in the happier days after the Revolution—did it meet again.

Nearly half a century passed before the General Assembly again took up the consideration of "Spiritual Songs." At its meeting in Edinburgh on December 20, 1695, Mr. Patrick Simson was appointed Moderator. His occupancy of the chair may have had something to do with the recurrence to the subject: for he was an eminent religious poet of his day. Ten years before this date he had published a volume with this title:—

Spiritual Songs or Holy Poems: *A Garden of True Delight,* Containing all the *Scripture-Songs* that are not in the Book of *Psalms,* together with several sweet Prophetical and Evangelical Scriptures, meet to be composed into Songs. *Translated into English meeter, and fitted to be sung with any of the common tunes of the Psalms.*

The volume was divided into six parts or books and filled 256 pages. It was a metrical rendering of portions of Scripture ranging from the Song of Moses in the fifteenth Chapter of Exodus to the Alleluia Song in the nineteenth Chapter of Revelation. As a former Assembly had looked with favour on the "travels" of Mr. Zachary Boyd, so this Assembly of 1695 made the Spiritual

Songs, which it afterwards called the "Scripture Songs," of Mr. Patrick Simson the subject of its deliberations.

Simson was ordained minister of Renfrew in 1653; but, after the restoration of Episcopacy, he was in 1662 deprived of his benefice. In 1672 he became an "indulged" minister at Kilmacolm: seven years later, however, he incurred the displeasure of the Privy Council, and was deprived also of that benefice. But whatever was his offence, he does not seem to have been very rigorously treated, for, as Wodrow tells us, "he continued several years after this in the peaceful exercise of his ministry in that place." As another minister had been appointed to the parish he must have had many idle hours, which he devoted to the translation of Scripture Songs and other portions of Holy Writ into English verse. On the passing of the Act of Parliament restoring "outed" ministers to their parishes, he returned to Renfrew as minister in 1690. There he lived to be the Father of the Church, and died on October 24, 1715, at the age of eighty-eight.

It was at the Assembly over which Simson presided that there was made, on January 3, 1696, a "Reference to the Commission to revise the Scripture Songs." Unfortunately the records both of the Assembly and of the Commission are missing for this period, and so we do not know what was done under this reference. But, apparently, there could not have been much enthusiasm on the subject; for ten years afterwards, on April 10, 1705, the General Assembly again recommended "it to their Commission to revise the book called Scriptural Songs in order to be prepared for public use, and report to the next Assembly." At the same time there were appointed two Committees—one to sit at Glasgow and the other at Edinburgh—for the purposes of revision; and they were instructed to consider also the unpublished

Scripture Songs of Mr. Andrew Wardroper, who was minister of Ballingry in Fifeshire from 1702 to 1717. On the former Committee was Mr. Patrick Simson, and on the latter was Principal Carstares. During the next three years, in the Commission and in the Assembly, there were reports, and references, and Acts sending the Scripture Songs down to Presbyteries for their consideration. The neglect or indifference of the Presbyteries seems to have caused discouragement to the Assembly, which, growing weary of the subject, gave powers to the Commission by the following Act :—

27*th April* 1708.—The General Assembly do Instruct and Appoint their Commission maturely to consider the printed version of the Scripture Songs, with the remarks of Presbyteries thereupon : And after Examination thereof, they are hereby Authorised and Impowered to conclude and establish that version, and to publish and emit it for the publick use of the Church, as was formerly done on the like occasion, and when our version of the Psalms was published in the year 1649.

The Commission met on July 12, and, feeling the responsibility of the power entrusted to it, invoked the aid of Synods and asked them to appoint "some of their number best acquainted with the original languages and knowen in poesie" to revise the printed version of the Scripture Songs, and to report their remarks in time for the next meeting. The next meeting was on December 2. It was then found that no *remarks* had been sent in, and the subject was again postponed. At the meeting on March 2, 1709, the Commission once more took up the subject; but, as *remarks* had come in only from Ross and Kirkcudbright, it was resolved to delay "further procedure in this affair at this time, until the remarks of other presbyteries were also brought in." As there is no subsequent reference to the Scripture Songs in the Minutes either of the Assembly or of the Commission, it would seem

that the subject was once more allowed to die down—only to be revived again in another form after the lapse of thirty-two years.

Like Zachary Boyd and David Leitch, the octogenarian minister of Renfrew must have been disappointed to see that none of his poetical labours were to find a place in the Psalmody of the Church.

CHAPTER II

THE PARAPHRASES IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A Paraphrase of the Psalms was formerly a usual designation of the Metrical Psalter. Other religious lyrics were called *Spiritual Songs*. But after the middle of the eighteenth century both these names disappeared from our ecclesiastical records; and thenceforward the former were known simply as *The Psalms*, and the latter as *The Paraphrases*. The full and official title of the last-named is, "**Translations and Paraphrases, in verse, of Several Passages of Sacred Scripture.**"

In the General Assembly the long and intermittent discussion of *The Paraphrases* began on May 25, 1741. On that day the Supreme Court took up consideration of a proposal, which was transmitted to it through its Committee on Overtures, "that it be recommended to some fit persons to turn some passages of the Old and New Testament into metre to be used in Churches as well as in private families." It does not appear from whom this proposal came; but, as it was submitted at the last session of the Assembly, there was no time for its adequate discussion, and it was referred *simpliciter* to the Commission to consider it and report. At next Assembly there was no report from the Commission. The matter, therefore, might have taken end, had not a similar proposal then come up from the Presbytery of

Dundee, whose representatives were charged to support it. Thereupon the Assembly approved of the proposal, appointed a Committee of nineteen ministers to consider it and report, and caused a formal letter, dated June 1, 1742, to be sent to the Presbytery, intimating the appointment of the Committee. But neither did this Committee show any eager despatch in the business, for it gave in no report to either of the two following Assemblies. On May 18, 1744, however, its appointment was renewed with the addition of five ministers and four elders, and there was appointed as its "Moderator" or Convener, Mr. Patrick Cumming, minister of the Old Church, Edinburgh, and Professor of Church History in the University.

This Committee at once set to work, and to it belongs the honour of having produced what may be regarded as the germ of our present *Paraphrases*. It addressed a circular letter to Presbyteries inviting them to send in contributions, from whatever source, towards the proposed collection of paraphrases; and it submitted a report to the Assembly, on May 10, 1745, recommending a collection of forty-five "Versions of Several Portions of Scripture." These forty-five paraphrases were favourably received by the Assembly and were remitted to a Revision Committee, which sat next day, reported approval of them, and recommended that they should be sent down to Presbyteries to "report their opinion thereupon to the next General Assembly, with certification that such Presbyteries as shall not send up a report shall be held as approvers." The Committee's recommendation seemed to indicate that in another year these paraphrases would obtain ecclesiastical sanction. But no. The forces of a conservative opposition were aroused. There were those in that Assembly, like some in our own day, who held

that only the Psalms of David should be sung in public worship; and they raised the question of the legality of sanctioning these paraphrases. This question was remitted to a Committee, who, within six days, reported that, basing their opinion on what had been done by the General Assemblies of 1706, 1707, 1708, and 1742, it would be legal to sanction the use of the paraphrases. Then the opponents, wishing to delay if they could not prevent the authorisation, raised a debate as to the terms in which the collection of paraphrases should be transmitted to Presbyteries. It was finally resolved on May 18, 1745, to print the collection and transmit it to Presbyteries, simply for their opinion and observations. This was done, and so there appeared the 1745 edition. It was a small 12mo volume, entitled *Translations and Paraphrases of Several Passages of Sacred Scripture.* By a curious coincidence the edition of forty-five paraphrases appeared in the memorable year of '45—the year of the second Jacobite Rebellion.

The paraphrases continued to make **slow progress.** When the General Assembly met in May 1746, it was found that several Presbyteries had not sent in their "observations," and so the matter was again remitted to them. At the meeting of the General Assembly in 1747 some "observations" which had been sent in were handed over to the Paraphrase Committee to consider them and to report to next Assembly. Additional Presbyterial returns were given in to the Assembly of 1748, and these also were handed over to the Paraphrase Committee—to which was now added Mr. George Blackwell, minister of Bathgate. The policy of obstruction was again plainly adopted in the General Assembly of 1749; for it was then represented that, owing to the "Confusions of the late Rebellion, many Presbyteries had lost the copies which had been sent

them." The Assembly, therefore, instructed the Committee to have a second impression printed, and to give effect in it to such amendments upon the former edition as they thought proper. This second impression was ready by May 1750, but it was the following July before it was distributed. Several Presbyteries discussed it, but only a few sent in their "observations" to the General Assembly of 1751, which again referred it to the inferior courts for their opinion. But the Assembly took a small step forward. To lessen the impatience of those who were wanting these paraphrases, it recommended that they might be used in private families.

Four more years passed, during which there were reports of discussions and amendments in Presbyteries, and retransmissions to them by the Assembly. At the Assembly of 1755 it was found that thirty-two Presbyteries had made no returns, and this was made an excuse for further delay. These Presbyteries were ordered to send up their opinions to next Assembly, and those Presbyteries which had already sent in answers were required to send up a new extract of the same. These injunctions may or may not have been obeyed, but the "next Assembly" did not deal with them.

After **fourteen years** of discussions and reports the question was silently dropped. Evidently there was a minority in the Church and in the Assembly influential enough to prevent a formal rejection of the paraphrases, but there was a majority in favour of the exclusive use of the Psalms of David; and so this collection of forty-five paraphrases never received ecclesiastical sanction for use in public worship.

Twenty years passed before the subject was again taken up. To the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr belongs the honour of having revived it. On May 29, 1775, an overture from that Synod came before the General

Assembly, setting forth that there were several ministers and congregations who were desirous of using the beforementioned forty-five paraphrases, and praying that they might be allowed to do so. The matter was too serious to be settled off-hand; and the General Assembly appointed a Committee of twenty-three to consider it and "to report, if possible, to this Assembly; if not, to be a standing Committee to report to the ensuing Assembly." On this Committee were four of the Paraphrasts, viz. Hugh Blair, John Ogilvie, John Logan, and Samuel Martin, and there was subsequently added to it another, viz. John Morison; and Mr. James Brown, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, was appointed Convener. It was at the "ensuing Assembly" on May 28, 1776, that the Committee reported

> That, in discharge of the trust committed to them, they have held sundry meetings, and did both by letters and public advertisements invite the assistance of all who wish the improvement of our present psalmody. That in consequence of this they have received sundry pieces of sacred poetry which may be of use, and hope that if this Assembly shall be pleased to continue the Committee and to empower them to make a collection from poems already published as well as from manuscripts already received, or which may hereafter be sent to them, they may be able against the next Assembly to produce such a Collection as shall deserve the approbation of that Venerable Court.

The report was approved and the Committee was continued. On May 30, 1777, the Committee reported their diligence to the Assembly, were continued, and had Dr. M'Knight added to their number. On May 22, 1778, the Committee made a notable report to the Assembly, which showed that among them there was some serious difference of opinion. The Report said

> That from a great many Paraphrases transmitted to them they had made a large selection of those which appeared to be best calculated to promote the end in view: That this selection had

been deliberately and carefully examined by a considerable number of the Committee, and in consequence of the remarks made by the members a new selection has been made of such Paraphrases as have obtained the general approbation of the Committee, and which is herewith produced. The Committee have small hope of making any very valuable additions to the selection now produced, and leave it to the wisdom of the Assembly whether it is proper to direct this selection to be printed and transmitted to Presbyteries for their inspection or not, and to give such directions in relation to this affair as shall seem meet.

The General Assembly, however, did no more than simply renew "the Committee, with power to print and transmit to Presbyteries the collection already made if they see cause." The Committee did not "see cause," but reserved the collection for their own further consideration for another year. On May 28, 1779, they reported to the General Assembly "That from the poetical translations of Scripture sent to them they have made a selection of such as they judged to be best suited to answer the end in view." This selection they left it to the wisdom of the Assembly either to transmit to Presbyteries or to entrust to the consideration of the Committee for another year, in the hope of their making additions to it which would "render it more competent." How the report was received is not further revealed than by this laconic minute—"The General Assembly renewed the said Committee."

Another year passed. The Committee came back to the Assembly expressing satisfaction with the progress and prospects of their work, but asking to be continued yet another year, and in the meantime to be empowered to send down the result of their completed labours to the Presbyteries. On June 1, 1780, the General Assembly, granting only part of their request, "renewed the said Committee and recommended to them to continue their diligence to ripen the same against next Assembly and

if possible to have a fair copy of the Collection for the review of the said Assembly." It was probably to help them to "ripen" their diligence that next day the Assembly added six ministers and three elders to their number.

And now the long, slow labours of six years—or rather of twenty years, if we add the fourteen previously spent on the collection of forty-five paraphrases incorporated in this larger collection—were drawing to a much-desired, although a somewhat inconclusive end. On May 26, 1781, the Committee gave in their last report to the General Assembly, and its tenor may be gathered from the deliverance which embodied its recommendations. As this Act is the only authorisation that "The Paraphrases" ever obtained for use in public worship in the Church of Scotland, we give its operative clauses:—

1781. 1st June. Sess. 8. *Interim Act anent the Psalmody.* The Report of the Committee on the Psalmody was produced and read. . . . Which being considered by the General Assembly and they having deliberated thereupon, the Assembly appoints these Translations and Paraphrases to be transmitted to the several Presbyteries of the Church, in order that they may report their opinion concerning them to the ensuing General Assembly; and in the meantime, allows this Collection of sacred Poems to be used in Public Worship in congregations where the minister finds it for edification. The General Assembly renews the appointment of their Committee, with powers to judge of any corrections or alterations of these Poems that may be suggested, previous to the transmission of the same, and with directions to cause a proper number of copies, with such corrections as they approve, to be printed for the consideration of Presbyteries and for public use.

The Act goes on to legislate in regard to the expense of printing: taking precautions that the paraphrases may not be "printed in any careless or incorrect manner"; and granting to "the Printer of the Church" the exclusive privilege of printing and publishing for five

years, so that he may be able to sell the copies at a moderate price. By subsequent Acts of Assembly in 1786 and in 1795 this privilege was extended successively for nine and fourteen years—making in all a period of twenty-eight years.

The Committee, reappointed in 1781, never again reported. The edition which they issued that year is the same as we now use. And the Act of 1781 was the Assembly's **last** piece of legislation on the subject-matter of **The Paraphrases**.

From a study of the foregoing pages it will be seen that the General Assembly never gave its full and formal authority for any other than the metrical psalms to be sung in public worship. It is not clear by what authority the *Spiritual Songs*, the *Conclusions*, and the *Prayers* were inserted in some editions of the Old Scottish Psalter; but there does not seem to have been any Act of Assembly sanctioning their use. The collection of forty-five paraphrases was sanctioned only for use in private families. And it was only "*in the meantime*" that our present collection of sixty-seven paraphrases and five hymns was allowed "to be used in public worship in congregations where the minister might find it for edification." There was, therefore, even in this, a want of fulness and finality in the authorisation.

Another notable thing about these paraphrases is, that, although many Churches have made more or less use of them, no Church has subjected the collection as a whole to any process of revision. Once, between the years 1748 and 1753, it seemed as if a collection of "Scripture Songs" by Ralph Erskine would be adopted by the **Associate** or **Burgher Synod**. But on the death of Erskine in the latter year the matter was dropped. On two subsequent occasions a similar proposal was made and rejected. Once more, in 1811, it again came up and

was practically set aside by the resolution—"In the meantime to permit those ministers of this Synod who may deem it expedient to use in public worship such of the paraphrases and hymns of the Church of Scotland as may to them appear calculated to serve the ends of edification." And, in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland on May 30, 1845, overtures calling for a revision of the paraphrases were considered. Much difference of opinion was manifested in an animated discussion. The subject was remitted to a Committee, which, however, failed to make any report to the next Assembly, and was by it discharged. The General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church in 1898 (as we have seen) revised, and enlarged by the addition of a number of second versions, our present Scottish Psalter; but it laid no amending hand on the paraphrases.

The paraphrases as published in 1781 are the same as are still being used in all the leading Presbyterian Churches of the British Empire.

CHAPTER III

THE MAKERS OF THE PARAPHRASES

If we include all who had any share in putting the paraphrases into their present shape we must say that **the Makers of the Paraphrases were many.** Some of them, however, are now unknown to fame. They were members of Committees or Presbyteries entrusted with the duty to consider and correct; and so, although they gave artistic touches to what others had written, there is no record of their individual poetic work. Yet they helped, by changing some phrase or line or stanza, to form the polished verses which we now sing. For instance, it was some unknown member of the first Committee who suggested the change—and was it not an improvement?—of Watts' verse:

> But vengeance and damnation lyes
> On rebels who refuse the grace:
> Who God's eternal Son despise,
> The hottest hell shall be their place;

into (as in our Paraphrase xli. verse 6):

> But vengeance just for ever lies
> on all the rebel race,
> Who God's eternal Son despise,
> and scorn his offer'd grace.

We must not forget the manner in which the

paraphrases were brought together and put into their final form, if we are to have clear ideas as to their **Authorship.** By letters to Presbyteries and general advertisements, contributions of metrical translations of passages of Scripture suitable for singing in public worship were asked to be sent in—the poetical pieces being either original productions or selections from any source. In response to the request many were received; and from these a large Committee made choice of a number which they amended and, in altered form, sent down to Presbyteries inviting suggestions as to further amendment. These suggestions were considered by the Committee; effect was given to some of them; and then the selection, as altered, was again sent down to Presbyteries. This process, as we have seen, went on in the case of the 1745 edition for fourteen years, and in the case of the 1781 edition for six years. The consequence is, that the names of many amenders are unknown; that the authorship of some of the paraphrases is clouded in doubt or wholly hidden; and that only a few of them have found a place in our collection in the precise form in which they originally left the hands of their authors.

Anonymous Authorship.—It is generally admitted that no clear light can now be thrown on the authorship of **eight** paraphrases, viz. Nos. vi. xxiii. xxvi. xxxvi. l. lii. lix. and lxiv. And the same is said by some regarding **five** others; but of these five, Paraphrases xviii. and xlviii. have been ascribed to Logan, Paraphrase xxxii. to Doddridge, and Paraphrases li. and lxiii. to Watts. Of the anonymous authors we can, of course, give no biographical notes. They live in the music of their songs, but from earth

Their mem'ry and their name is gone.

Their record is on high.

The authorship of **Fifty-four Paraphrases** and of the **Five Hymns** is now with more or less certainty known. Of these known authors we give, in alphabetical order, the following brief sketches :—

Joseph Addison.—This eminent writer ranks high in English Literature, but more for his prose than for his poetry. Indeed, it has been said of him that "as a light essayist he has no equal, and scarcely a second, in English Literature." Of the five hymns inserted at the end of our collection of paraphrases, he was the author of the first three. They originally appeared in the famous paper *The Spectator*, in the publication of which he was associated with Sir Richard Steele. Two of the hymns—"When all thy mercies, O my God," and "The spacious firmament on high"—are to be found in most Church Hymn Books. Readers of the former hymn will not wonder that it has been said of its author, "He was a good man—a man who trusted in God, and so was full of gratitude to God." Some of the bare facts of his life are these :—He was the son of a clergyman ; he was born at Milston, Wiltshire, on May 1, 1672 ; he graduated at Oxford in 1693 ; and after 1699, when he got a pension of £300 per annum from Government, he travelled for two years on the Continent ; he filled several important offices of State ; he was married in 1716 to the Dowager Countess of Warwick ; and he died at Kensington on June 17, 1719.

Thomas Blacklock.—Paraphrase xvi.—"In life's gay morn, when sprightly youth"—is the only one ascribed to him. And it is pathetic to think how little of a "life's gay morn" or of a "sprightly youth" there was for him. He was born at Annan in Dumfriesshire on November 10, 1721. His father, who was a bricklayer, and his mother were both natives of Cumberland. When he was only six months old he lost his eyesight through an attack of

smallpox. This was a dire misfortune to the child of a poor family. His father, unable to provide him with the liberal education which would fit him for a professional career, set himself to do the best he could for his son by reading to him such instructive books as he could secure. Some of the youths of Annan also did the same, and took the trouble to teach him what of Latin and kindred subjects they had learned at school. He early found great delight in poetry, particularly in that of James Thomson and Allan Ramsay; and, when only twelve years of age, he cheered his solitary hours by composing verses which were circulated in manuscript among his friends. The bitterness of his lot was sadly increased through the death, by an accident, of his father in 1740. But in the following year a helping hand was providentially held out to him. Dr. John Stevenson, an eminent Edinburgh physician, happened to be in Dumfries, whither the youth had gone to live, and, hearing the story of his life and reading some of his poems, he recognised the possibilities that were in him, and persuaded him to come and attend, with his aid, classes at the Edinburgh University. There he remained until the "Troubles" of 1745 led him again to retire to the home of a poor relative in Dumfries. When the excitement of the Jacobite Rebellion had died down he returned to Edinburgh. There he made the acquaintance of David Hume, who, it is said, gave him substantial financial aid, and of Provost Alexander, whose wife, being a Frenchwoman, helped him to acquire a thorough knowledge of French. In 1746 he published a volume of Poems in Glasgow; in 1754 another volume in Edinburgh; and in 1756 Professor Spence of Oxford edited another volume of his Poems and prefixed to it an account of the blind poet. His poetry is now only to be found in old, musty books, but in his own day it

was eagerly read. Desirous, however, of obtaining a means of livelihood less precarious than that of authorship, he in 1757 proposed to give a course of lectures on oratory to young men going forward to the bar or the pulpit. He was dissuaded from the enterprise by David Hume, and he then finally determined to enter the ministry of the Church. When he had completed the necessary *curriculum*, he was at the age of thirty-seven licensed on November 23, 1758, by the Presbytery of Dumfries. In June of the following year the Crown, in the exercise of its patronage, presented him to the vacant parish of Kirkcudbright. But the parishioners raised objections to him on account of his blindness. The case went through the inferior courts to the General Assembly, which, on May 29, 1761, sustained the presentation. It is noteworthy that, notwithstanding this decision, the General Assembly next day passed an Act forbidding a blind man to be taken on trials by any Presbytery or Synod without first consulting the General Assembly. It was on April 22, 1762, that he was ordained and inducted into his parish; and so for two years from the date of his presentation he was deprived of the stipend of the benefice. His settlement did not prove a happy one, and an arrangement having been made for a small annuity, he resigned the parish on November 29, 1765, and retired to live in Edinburgh. He eked out his small income by receiving boarders, whom he helped in their study of languages and philosophy. The University of Aberdeen, more appreciative than his own *Alma Mater*, recognised his merits and in 1767 conferred on him the degree of D.D. In the provincial town of Kilmarnock there was published in 1786 a volume of poems by a then obscure poet named Robert Burns. It fell into the hands of Dr. Blacklock, who at once recognising the genius displayed in it, wrote of it in glowing terms to a brother-

clergyman. That letter was perhaps the means of saving to Scotland her beloved bard. Burns was arranging to emigrate to the West Indies; but when he was shown the letter and had read it, he changed his mind and determined to go to Edinburgh. In the early winter of that year he did go, and was the "lion" of the season. The fame of Dr. Blacklock was wide and well established. Many eminent persons visited him in his humble house, among whom were Mrs. Cockburn, the authoress of "The Flowers of the Forest," and the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, although inclined to despise everything and everybody that were Scotch, was attracted to the good, kindly, and gifted Blacklock, to whom he paid a genial visit, and whose wife, it is said, was immensely astonished by his drinking nineteen cups of tea! Dr. Blacklock fell into ill-health about the year 1787; and four years later—on July 7, 1791—he died, in the seventieth year of his age. Many a reader of this brief sketch will recall, by way of contrast, how different was the lot of that other blind poet-preacher of the Church of Scotland—Dr. George Matheson, the author of the hymn, "O Love that wilt not let me go"—who was so greatly loved, honoured, and blessed, not only in his successive parishes of Innellan and St. Bernard's, Edinburgh, but also in the whole Church, and who died on August 29, 1906, at the age of sixty-four.

Hugh Blair. — He was the great-grandson of the Covenanter Robert Blair, who was minister of St. Andrews in the time of Charles I. His father, John Blair, was a merchant in Edinburgh, where Hugh was born on April 7, 1718. He studied at the High School and the University; took his degree of M.A. in 1739; was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1741; and thereafter, for a short time, was tutor to Simon, Master of Lovat. In 1742 he became minister

of Collessie in Fife, and in 1743 was translated to the Second Charge of the Canongate Parish in Edinburgh. Subsequently he was translated, first to Lady Yester's Church, and then to the High Church, both in the same city. In 1757 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of St. Andrews. He was eminent as a preacher, and *Blair's Sermons*, after their publication, enjoyed a long-continued and wide popularity. Judged by present-day opinion they would be accounted moral essays without much originality of thought; but their polished style secured for them the admiration of "persons of the most distinguished character and eminent rank." They won the appreciation of Dr. Johnson, and also of King George III., who, in 1780, bestowed on their author a pension of £200 a year. In 1759 he began a series of lectures on *Composition* in the University of Edinburgh, which were so popular that in 1762 he was appointed to a newly founded Chair of Rhetoric and Belles-lettres with a salary of £70 a year. This appointment he held till 1783. He died on December 27, 1800. To him is given the sole credit of the authorship of Paraphrase xliv.—"Behold the Saviour on the Cross." Also, as a member of the Paraphrase Committee appointed in 1744, and of the revived Committee appointed in 1775, and as a member of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, which gave careful and repeated consideration to the paraphrases transmitted to them, he had a large hand in the work of revision. The Presbytery suggested many changes, most of which were adopted by the Paraphrase Committee; and he seems to have taken a leading part on the subject in the Presbytery. Notably it suggested that, after Doddridge's hymn on Hab. iii. 17, 18, there should be added *Another of the Same*, and it submitted one, containing four verses, evidently by Blair. But the Committee, rather than have a *Second Version*, sub-

stituted in Paraphrase xxxii.—"What though no flow'rs the fig-tree clothe"—the first three verses of Blair's paraphrase, retained one by Doddridge in an altered form, and added another (verse 4) which has been attributed to Cameron.

Robert Blair.—He also, like Hugh Blair, was a grandson of Robert Blair, the famous Covenanting minister of St. Andrews. He was the son of David Blair, minister of the Old Church, Edinburgh. He was born at Edinburgh in 1699. There, and in Holland, he was educated for the Church, and on August 5, 1729, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of his native city. On January 5, 1731, he was ordained and inducted into the parish of Athelstaneford in Haddingtonshire. He was an earnest preacher, and devoted himself faithfully to the duties of his pastorate. Being possessed of private means, he was able to gratify his taste in the study of natural science, and corresponded with several eminent naturalists. He was on intimate terms with the brave and godly Colonel Gardiner, who fell at the battle of Prestonpans. Among his many other friends and correspondents were Dr. Isaac Watts and Dr. Doddridge; and, like them, he has a firm place, as a sacred poet, in English literature, through his well-known poem, "The Grave." Speaking of it in a letter to Dr. Doddridge, he says: "It was written, I hope, in a way not unbecoming my profession as a minister of the Gospel, though the greatest part of it was composed several years before I was clothed with so sacred a character." In the same letter, telling with what result he had submitted the poem to Dr. Watts, he goes on to say: "He [Watts] mentions to me, that he had offered it to two booksellers of his acquaintance, who, he tells me, did not care to run the risk of publishing it. They can scarcely think (considering how critical an age we live in, with respect to

such kind of writings) that a person living three hundred miles from London, could write so as to be acceptable to the fashionable and polite. Perhaps it may be so; though, at the same time, I must say, in order to make it more generally liked, I was obliged sometimes to go cross to my own inclination, well knowing that whatever poem is written on a serious argument must, on that very account, be under peculiar disadvantages; and therefore, proper arts must be used to make such a piece go down with a licentious age, which cares for none of those things." A publisher was found for it in 1743, and thereafter it long continued to issue from the press. Blair died of a fever on February 4, 1746,[1] leaving a widow and six children. His fourth son, Robert Blair of Avontoun, became a successful lawyer, and rose to be Lord President of the Court of Session. Robert Blair was appointed a member of the Paraphrase Committee in 1742, and again in 1744; and it was probably through his intimate acquaintance with Watts and Doddridge that so many of their hymns were introduced into the collection of Forty-five Paraphrases. His early death removed him from having much share in the subsequent work of revision, as also, of course, from the later work of making the larger collection. But he is credited with the authorship, in whole or in part, of four paraphrases, viz. Nos. iv. xxxiii. xxxiv. and xlv.

Paraphrase iv.—"How still and peaceful is the grave!"—has been so changed and amplified as to be practically a different poem from the one written by Blair. Paraphrase xxxiii.—"Father of all! we bow to thee"—is only very slightly changed from the form in which he left it. Paraphrase xxxiv.—"Thus spoke the Saviour

[1] A handsome obelisk was, in 1857, erected to his memory at Athelstaneford.

of the world"—is so largely altered as to be little more than an imitation of his poem beginning

> With solemn Thanksgiving, our Lord
> his Father thus address'd:
> For ever may the sov'reign Lord
> of Heaven and Earth be blest.

And the same, although in a less degree, may also be said of Paraphrase xlv.—"Ungrateful sinners! whence this scorn." The first two verses are as he left them; verse 3 was inserted at the suggestion of the Presbytery of Edinburgh; and the remaining three verses were probably the composition of Cameron.

William Cameron.—Few details of his early life are known. He was born in 1751, was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and was duly licensed to preach the Gospel. But it was not until August 17, 1786, that he received ordination and was inducted as minister of Kirknewton in Linlithgowshire. There he remained until his death on November 17, 1811. He had poetical talents of no mean order. His first volume, *A Collection of Poems*, appeared in 1781, and a posthumous volume, *Poems on Several Occasions*, appeared in 1813. "His Song," says Macmeekan, "on the restoration of the forfeited estates, 1784, beginning, 'As o'er the Highland hills I hied,' and adapted to the fine old tune, 'The Haughs o' Cromdale,' is excellent, and was enthusiastically received." At Aberdeen, we are told, he gained the friendship of Dr. James Beattie, Professor of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, and author of *The Minstrel*; and it was probably through him that Cameron was introduced to the Paraphrase Committee. He was only a probationer at the time, and therefore could not be, and was not, a member of the Committee. And yet no other man has more largely left his mark on our present collection of

paraphrases. To him belongs the sole authorship of Paraphrase xiv., "While others crowd the house of mirth," and of Paraphrase xvii., "Rulers of Sodom! hear the voice." And to him, with nearly common consent, are attributed greater or less changes on, at least, thirty-three of the other paraphrases and on two of the hymns. The paraphrases are Nos. i. iii. iv. vi. vii. xxvi. xxxii. xxxiv. xxxvi. xxxviii.-xliii. xlv.-xlvii. xlix.-li. liv.-lvii. lix.-lxiii. lxv.-lxvii., and the hymns Nos. iii. and iv.

Philip Doddridge.—Daniel Doddridge, an oil merchant in London, the son of a clergyman who kept his conscience and lost his benefice at the Restoration in 1662, and the grand-nephew of Sir John Doddridge, who in the troubles of the Civil War lost his estate, worth two thousand a year, in Devonshire, married the daughter of John Baumann, a Moravian pastor who had fled as a German refugee to England. Of this union there were nineteen children; but eighteen of them had gone to the grave, and only a sickly girl was left, when a twentieth child was born. In the natural solicitude for the half-dead mother, no one paid much attention to the tiny, lifeless-looking infant. But a kindly neighbour, noticing some signs of vitality, took the child in charge, and, "by dint of tender nursing, saved to the world what it had so nearly lost." And so that infant lived to be the famous Philip Doddridge. He was born in London on June 26, 1702.

His heart was early set on being a Nonconformist minister. But his hopes seemed blighted at the age of thirteen, when his father died, and, owing to the misapplication of funds by the executor, left him too poor to prosecute his studies. On easy terms, through the generous offer of the Duchess of Bedford, he might have been educated for, and secured a living in, the Church of England. But, for conscience' sake, he refused the tempting offer. At length

an eminent dissenting minister, Dr. Samuel Clarke, gave him a helping hand, and he ultimately attained the object of his desire. After serving in two minor charges he was, on March 19, 1730, ordained to the ministry of a Nonconformist congregation in Northampton, where he also became President of a dissenting Theological Academy which gained a high reputation. There he laboured both as a pastor and a teacher for the rest of his life. In 1736 the University of Aberdeen conferred on him the degree of D.D. Falling into ill-health, he was advised to take a voyage to some warmer climate, which he was enabled to do by means of a subscription, started by a clergyman of the Church of England and supported by other friends and admirers. He set sail, with his wife, on September 17, 1751, for Lisbon, where he arrived on October 13; but twelve days afterwards—on October 26, 1751—he died. He was a man of most amiable character, deep piety, and many accomplishments. While broad in his sympathies and liberal in his sentiments, he was intensely earnest in his evangelicalism. In his lifetime he had a great and well-merited reputation, which has been extended and perpetuated by his works. The chief of these are, *The Family Expositor*, *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, *The Life of Colonel Gardiner*, and Hymns. **Four** of his hymns, more or less altered, are now our Paraphrases ii. xxxii. xxxix. and lx.

At his Academy he had a pupil named **Risdon Darracott** (b. 1717; d. 1749), who wrote a hymn whose first verse was:

> O God of Bethel, whose kind hand
> Has all our fathers led,
> And in this desert howling land
> Has still their table spread—

which some think may have suggested to Doddridge his hymn:—

O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thine Israel still is fed,
Who through this weary Pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

But whereas the former hymn was written in 1741, the latter existed in manuscript in January 1737. But even Doddridge's hymn has been greatly altered in our Paraphrase ii. Of Paraphrase xxxii. we have already spoken under **Hugh Blair.** In Paraphrase xxxix. the changes are few, except that our sixth verse has been substituted for this verse by him :—

His Silver Trumpets publish loud
The *Jub'lee* of the Lord :
Our Debts are all remitted now,
Our Heritage restor'd.

In Paraphrase lx., "Father of peace, and God of love," material changes have been made in verses 2 and 4; but the thought and spirit of the whole hymn are unchanged.

John Logan—Michael Bruce.—For more than a century and a quarter there has raged a keen controversy, which is still unsettled, as to the rival claims of these two men to the authorship of certain pieces of poetic literature. These pieces are (1) the "Ode to the Cuckoo," which Edmund Burke characterised as "the most beautiful lyric in the language, and of which we remind the reader by quoting two verses :—

Hail, beauteous stranger of the wood,
Attendant on the spring !
Now Heav'n repairs thy rural seat
And woods thy welcome sing.
. . . . . .
Sweet bird, thy bow'r is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear :
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year ;

and (2) Paraphrase viii., "Few are thy days, and full of woe"; Paraphrase xi., "O happy is the man who hears"; and Paraphrase xviii., "Behold! the mountain of the Lord." Some critics claim these pieces for Bruce; others for Logan. Of course we have here to deal only with the question of the paraphrases, but the authorship of that ode is an element in the question. It seems convenient to place these two poets side by side in our biographical notes.

Michael Bruce was born at Kinnesswood, a retired village on the eastern margin of Loch Leven, in Kinrossshire, on March 27, 1746—less than a fortnight before the fatal day of Culloden. His father was a hand-loom weaver in humble circumstances, well known for his piety, integrity, and industry; and he was an elder in the Church of the Burghers, which had but lately been formed by a secession from the Church of Scotland. Michael was the fifth of eight children in this deeply religious home. From earliest years he was delicate in health, apt to learn, and fond of reading. For these reasons it seemed fitting, as it was also the ambition of his godly parents, to educate him for the ministry. He was sent to the parish school, which he attended continuously until his sixteenth year, except when he was absent through illness, or when, in the summer months, he was herding the cattle of a neighbour under the shadow of the Lomonds. In his herding time he drank in the inspirations of scenery clothed in natural grandeur and filled with romantic associations, which awakened and fed his poetic genius; and in the school his master instructed him and four others in those subjects which prepared him for entering the University of Edinburgh. Thither he went in 1762—his prospects being brightened by a legacy of £9 which came to his father, and by the promise of assistance from a wealthier neighbour.

Three winter sessions Michael passed in Edinburgh, where his winning manners attached to him several earnest-minded fellow-students, among whom was John Logan. During two of the summer vacations he taught a small school, first at Gairney Bridge, near Kinross, and afterwards at Forrest Mill, near Alloa. The schoolhouse at the latter place was low-roofed, damp, and close; and it therefore helped to develop the disease—consumption—which had early fastened on him. Having written there his longest poem, "Lochleven," he returned in the autumn, weak and worn with illness, to his home, where, in the words of the last lines of "Lochleven,"

> Slow disease
> Prey'd on his pining vitals, and the blasts
> Of dark December shook his humble cot.

Home brought him no relief. He gradually grew worse throughout the winter. The brightness of spring cheered his fainting spirit and roused him to write his beautiful "Elegy to Spring," but brought him no illusions as to returning health. He was evidently thinking of himself when he penned these two stanzas of that elegy:—

> Now, Spring returns; but not to me returns
> The vernal joy my better years have known:
> Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
> And all the joys of life with health are flown.
> . . . . . .
> There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,
> When death shall shut these weary aching eyes:
> Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
> Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.

He lingered on through the spring, manifesting a cheerfulness of spirit which surprised his friends. To one of them he said, "Why should not a man be cheerful on the verge of heaven?" He had completed only his twenty-first year when, one summer day—July

5, 1767—he passed peacefully to his eternal rest. On his pillow was found his Bible, marked down at Jer. xxi. 10, "Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him." His poor aged parents, however, could not but weep when, after all their struggles and self-denials in order to give their gifted son an education befitting his genius, it fell to them to look on him lying early in his coffin, and to think,

> 'Twas not a life,
> 'Twas but a piece of childhood thrown away.

John Logan was born about the beginning of 1748, at Soutra in Midlothian. His father was a small farmer, zealously attached to the Church of the Burghers, for whose ministry John was early designed. The rudiments of education he received at the parish school of Soutra, and afterwards, when his father had removed to Gosford Mains, near Haddington, at a school in Musselburgh, where he was boarded with an old woman belonging to the same religious denomination as himself. In 1762 he went to the University of Edinburgh, where he met as a class-mate of the same year Michael Bruce, with whom he became an intimate friend. In an after-year, on the death of Bruce, looking back tenderly on that college friendship, he wrote: "Michael Bruce lives now no more but in the remembrance of his friends. No less amiable as a man than valuable as a writer; endued with good nature and with good sense; humane, friendly, benevolent—he loved his friends and was beloved by them with a degree of ardour that is only experienced in the era of youth and innocence." What a traitor to that friendship Logan must have been if, as some aver, he stole part of Bruce's literary renown!

Logan was a successful student, especially in languages and belles-lettres, and early attracted the favourable

notice of Dr. Hugh Blair, who thenceforward became his warm and life-long friend. After his Arts course was finished he began in 1765 to study theology, with the view of entering the ministry, not, however, of the Church of the Burghers, but of the Church of Scotland. In 1768 he went to Thurso Castle as tutor to a young gentleman, who was afterwards known as Sir John Sinclair, the compiler of the *Statistical Account of Scotland*. Logan does not seem to have been a *persona grata* at the Castle, and he soon returned home. It is supposed that it was on his journey either to or from Thurso that he paid the eventful visit to Michael Bruce's father at Kinnesswood, and obtained the book into which Michael had copied his poems and "Gospel Sonnets," with a view to publication.

In September 1770 Logan was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Haddington. It was in the same year that he published *Poems on Several Occasions, by Michael Bruce*. Bruce had been dead for three years, and there was no name given as editor. But it was well known at the time that Logan had edited the volume, and had written a short, graceful preface, wherein he pronounced a glowing eulogium on the character and genius of Bruce, and added: "To make up a Miscellany, some poems, wrote by different authors, are inserted, all of them original, and none of them destitute of merit." Thus this volume, although published under the name of Bruce, was really a "Miscellany" containing seventeen pieces by various authors. How many of them were Bruce's is a question in dispute. The "Ode to the Cuckoo" was in it, but was placed last but one in the collection; and there were in it none of our paraphrases. When this volume was put into the hands of old Bruce, and he had glanced over its contents, it is said that he burst into tears and exclaimed, "Where are my son's

Gospel Sonnets?"—meaning the paraphrases. Indignant at what he considered a wrong done to the memory of his son, he went to Edinburgh and demanded the return of the manuscript book he had entrusted to Logan. Logan professed not to be able to find it, and expressed the fear that the servants had singed fowls with it. This gross carelessness, even if there was nothing more, implying, as it did, a sad breach of trust in respect to a deceased college friend, casts a dark suspicion on the character and conduct of Logan. Two years afterwards old Bruce died. The "Miscellany" attracted little attention, and was soon forgotten.

Logan, in 1771, was recognised to be a young preacher of great eloquence, fervour, and popularity; and he received a presentation from the Magistrates and three Incorporations of Leith to the Second Charge of the South Leith Parish. But another presentation was given by the Kirk-Session and one Incorporation to a Mr. John Snodgrass. The case went to the Court of Session and was decided in favour of Logan, who was accordingly ordained and inducted on April 2, 1773. Two years later he was appointed by the General Assembly a member of the Paraphrase Committee; and to him, along with Cameron, most of the active work of the Committee was left. For this work he was well fitted. The man who wrote the lovely ballad, "The Braes of Yarrow," and the 58th Paraphrase, "Where high the heavenly temple stands," was certainly capable of writing, or of putting fine finishing touches to, other paraphrases. Moreover, he won fame as a thoughtful and popular lecturer on the Philosophy of History. During two winters he delivered in Edinburgh a course of lectures on this subject. These were so highly appreciated that when the post of Assistant and Successor to the Professor of Civil History in the

University of Edinburgh fell vacant he would have been appointed to it, but for the prescriptive right that a member of the Faculty of Advocates should hold this professorship. In 1781 he published these lectures under the title, *Elements of the Philosophy of History*, and another volume, entitled *An Essay on the Manners of Asia*. In this year it may be said that he had reached the zenith of his honour and influence. It was in the same year, too, that he published the famous volume of Poems under his own name. It contained the paraphrases in dispute, and also the "Ode to the Cuckoo," which stood first in the volume. With the appearance of this book began the long Logan-Bruce controversy, which it is not now probable will ever be satisfactorily settled. In 1783 he published a tragedy named *Runnamede*, designed to be acted on the stage, which brought him into trouble. It was offered to the Covent Garden Theatre, but was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain because of some supposed political allusions to the Government. It was, however, put on the stage in Edinburgh; but, having been coldly received, it was withdrawn after a single performance. His star was now on the wane. In the previous year he had annoyed his Kirk-Session by the "precipitant manner" in which he had introduced the paraphrases into the public worship; and to quell the threatened revolt of his precentor he wrote him the following:—

LEITH, *January* 19, 1782.

I charge you, Mr. Alexander Lindsay, to sing the Psalms or Hymns which are to be read out in the pulpit of South Leith to-morrow; as Session Clerk you are to obey the orders of the Session, as Precentor you are amenable only to the minister who preaches in public worship. If you refuse to comply with this order, I will prosecute you before the Presbytery of Edinburgh for disobedience to the Laws of the Church. (*Signed*) JOHN LOGAN.

This letter was read to the Kirk-Session, and naturally caused some irritation. And now the parishioners were indignant at their minister appearing as a playwright. Moreover, by this time he had fallen into intemperate habits, and there were rumours that he had been guilty of a graver offence. His day of usefulness, therefore, seemed to be over in South Leith; and in order to escape from a threatened ecclesiastical process, he withdrew to London, leaving it to his friend Dr. Hugh Blair to arrange the terms on which he would resign his charge. It was a full year before it was agreed to give him an annuity of £40 for life, and on December 27, 1786, the Presbytery accepted his resignation. Only two more years of life were before him. In London he became little better than a literary hack, although some of his work—particularly an able pamphlet entitled "A Review of the Charges against Mr. Warren Hastings"—was worthy of his best days. He died—some say of a broken heart—on December 28, 1788, and, since the truth must be told, he who had been the eloquent preacher, the brilliant lecturer, and the distinguished poet, was laid in a drunkard's grave when he was only in the forty-first year of his age.

Our limited space forbids us to enter into the details of the Logan-Bruce controversy. These are too numerous and too complicated to be compressed into a few pages with any satisfactory result. But the conclusion to which we have come may be stated. Bruce and Logan both undoubtedly possessed great poetical gifts. The former died young and immature, and some of his stanzas stood in need of the polishing art of a kindly and more experienced hand, and such finishing touches seem to have been given them by his friend Logan. But Logan, who was himself capable of as good original poetic work, yielded to temptation, and took to himself what

belonged to his deceased college friend. We think this was the case particularly in regard to the "Ode to the Cuckoo," which ought to be credited to Bruce, although there may be touches in it from the hand of Logan. On the other hand, we think the friends of Bruce claim too much for him in respect to the paraphrases. He may have written odd *stanzas* to take the place of doggerel verses used at Buchan's singing-class at Kinnesswood, but it does not therefore follow that he wrote *whole hymns*. What James Grant Wilson says, in his *Poets and Poetry of Scotland*, is the likeliest explanation :—

> The truth here seems to be that Bruce was the founder, and Logan the perfecter, of these exquisite devotional strains: the former supplied stanzas which the latter extended into poems, imparting to the whole a finished elegance and beauty of diction which Bruce does not seem to have been capable of giving them.

The early death of Bruce and the sottish habits of Logan, may have prejudiced the minds of critics too tenderly in favour of the one, and too severely in condemnation of the other. It should be remembered that Logan must have had eminent poetical qualifications since, at the early age of twenty-seven, he was made a member of the Paraphrase Committee, and that, having his mind turned to its work, he must have contributed some of his own original pieces, and have materially recast and improved others which now appear in our collection. We are therefore not surprised to find his name associated with the three paraphrases already mentioned, viz. Pars. viii. xi. xviii., and also with Par. ix., "Who can resist th' Almighty's arm"; Par. x., "In streets, and op'nings of the gates"; Par. xxxi., "Thus speaks the heathen: How shall man"; Par. xxxviii., "Just and devout old Simeon liv'd"; Par. liii., "Take comfort, Christians, when your friends"; Par.

lviii., "Where high the heavenly temple stands," and Hymn v., "The hour of my departure's come." There is, at least, more of Logan's than of any other one's work in these paraphrases. He is said to have also effected alterations on paraphrases Nos. i. ii. xxiii. xxv. xxviii. xlviii. and lxiii., although some of the alterations in certain of these paraphrases are also ascribed to Cameron.

Samuel Martin was born on July 17, 1740, at Anstruther Easter, in Fife, where his father was parish schoolmaster. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Dalkeith in August 1762, was ordained to the parish of Balmaghie in Kirkcudbrightshire in September 1768, and was translated to the parish of Monimail in Fife in September 1776. In April 1798 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of St. Andrews. He died on September 12, 1829. His long life was passed in quiet, faithful devotion to his ministerial duties. For several years, however, he had the honour of being Chaplain to the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly. In May 1775 he was appointed a member of the Paraphrase Committee. The tradition long lingered in his family that he did not take much share in the actual work, which was done chiefly by a small sub-Committee, and that he was disappointed because more of his own poetical pieces, and of those written by others which he sent in, were not accepted by the Committee. His published works consist of a volume of "Sermons" and two Poetical Epistles. He has a place here because he was the undoubted author of Paraphrase xii., "Ye indolent and slothful! rise."

John Morison was born in the parish of Cairney, Aberdeenshire, probably on June 12, 1750. He studied at King's College, Aberdeen, where he took his degree of M.A. in 1771. Before receiving his licence to preach in

1773 he had been tutor in two families in Caithness-shire, and also for a short time had taught a school in Thurso. It was probably when there that he made the acquaintance of Logan, who was then a tutor at Thurso Castle. Returning about this time to Edinburgh with the view of further study, especially in Greek, he was introduced to Dr. Macfarlane, minister of the Second Charge of Canongate Parish, and a member of the Paraphrase Committee. Encouraged by him, and perhaps also by Logan, Morison wrote some pieces—twenty-four in all—which he offered for the projected collection of paraphrases; and seven of them were accepted. But, even of these, some were slightly altered, as indeed were most of the paraphrases, by revising members of the Committee. The seven were: Par. xix., "The race that long in darkness pin'd"; Par. xxi., "Attend, ye tribes that dwell remote"; Par. xxvii., "Thus speaks the high and lofty One"; Par. xxviii., "Attend and mark the solemn feast"; Par. xxix., "Amidst the mighty, where is he"; Par. xxx., "Come, let us to the Lord our God"; and Par. xxxv., "'Twas on that night, when doom'd to know." These are among the finest in the collection, and show what high poetical talents were possessed by this Aberdeenshire minister, who had to wait long for his parish. Returning to the North from Edinburgh, he was engaged as tutor in the family of Colonel Sutherland of Uppat, near Golspie. It is supposed that it was through the influence of the Bishop of Derry, who happened to be visiting in Caithness and was greatly impressed with the abilities of Morison, that he was presented by Mr. John Freswick to the parish of Canisbay. He was ordained and inducted into that parish in September 1780, and there he remained until his death on June 12, 1798. When he first became a member of the General Assembly in 1781, he was added to the Paraphrase Committee just when it

was putting its finishing touches on its work. In 1792 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh. Besides his poetical contributions to the *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine*, his other literary efforts were an account of the parish of Canisbay, written for Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account*; a topographical history of Caithness for Chalmers' *Caledonia*; and a translation from the Greek of Herodian's *History*, which was never published. Some of his rejected paraphrases have been elsewhere preserved, and none of them would have been a discredit to our present collection.

John Ogilvie was the son of James Ogilvie, one of the ministers of Aberdeen, where he was born in 1733. He was educated there at Marischal College, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Aberdeen on July 16, 1755. On March 15, 1759, he was ordained to the parish of Lumphanan, Aberdeenshire, where he remained only a year, and then was translated to the neighbouring parish of Midmar, of which he was minister for the long period of fifty-three years. In the seclusion of that remote rural parish he devoted himself to his pastoral duties and to literary pursuits. He was not, however, forgotten; honours came to him. In May 1775 he was appointed by the General Assembly a member of the Paraphrase Committee; he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, Edinburgh; and he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Aberdeen. Occasionally he undertook the then expensive and tedious journey to London, where, through his friend and admirer, James Boswell, he became acquainted with Dr. Johnson, Charles Churchill the satirist, and other literary magnates. He was a voluminous writer on several subjects. In addition to his poems—one of which was "Britannia: a National Epic poem in twenty books"—he was the author of some works on philosophy and Christian ethics. His biographer remarks

of him: "He was an able man lost. His intellectual wealth and industry were wasted in huge and unhappy speculations. . . . Had the same talent which Ogilvie threw away on a number of subjects being concentrated on one, and that one chosen with judgment and taste, he might have rivalled in popularity the most renowned of his contemporaries." His one contribution to our collection is Paraphrase lxii., "Lo! in the last of days behold." But a writer says that "several of his hymns are to be found in collections in use in the United States and Great Britain." He died on November 17, 1813, in the eightieth year of his age.

Thomas Randall was born in 1710. He studied at Edinburgh, where he graduated as M.A. in 1730. On March 21, 1738, he was ordained and admitted to the parish of Inchture, near Dundee. On May 18, 1744, he was added to the General Assembly's Paraphrase Committee. On June 21, 1770, he was translated to the First Charge of the parish of Stirling. Four years before his going there a Mr. David Thomson had been presented to the parish of St. Ninian's. He was unacceptable to the parishioners, who disputed his settlement. Litigation ensued, and continued for seven years. At length the General Assembly decided the case, and on June 29, 1773, ordered the Presbytery of Stirling to take steps for the admission of Mr. Thomson. Mr. Randall sympathised with the parishioners, and, as a protest against the settlement, was one of those who absented themselves from the induction service. For this, which was considered contumacious to the Supreme Court, he was summoned to the bar of the next General Assembly, and was there, on May 26, 1774, publicly rebuked by the Moderator. His two works published, the one before and the other after his death, were *Tracts concerning Patronage, with a Candid Inquiry into the Constitution of the Church of Scotland*

in the Relation to the Settlement of Ministers, and *Remarks on the Subject of Modern Religious Divisions*. They both show the decidedly ecclesiastical bent of his mind, which was afterwards to be seen also in his descendants. He died on July 21, 1780, and left a family of three sons and two daughters. Thomas, his second son, became minister of Lady Yester's parish, Edinburgh; and on succeeding his uncle, William Davidson, in the estate of Muirhouse, near Edinburgh, he assumed the name of Davidson. His grandson is Dr. Randall Davidson, the present Archbishop of Canterbury, who therefore has an interesting connection with our Scottish paraphrases in virtue of the fact that his great-grandfather, Thomas Randall, was the author of Paraphrase xlix:—

> Though perfect eloquence adorn'd
> my sweet persuasive tongue.

William Robertson, whose date of birth is unknown, was the son of David Robertson, of Brunton, Fife. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy on June 14, 1711. After ministering for a short time to a congregation in London, he was inducted as minister of the parish of Borthwick on September 23, 1714. On November 22, 1733, he was translated to Lady Yester's Church, Edinburgh, and thence to the First Charge of Old Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, on October 10, 1736. He died on November 16, 1745. His name is sometimes confused with that of his more famous son, Dr. Wm. Robertson, who also from 1759 was minister of Old Greyfriars' Church; and who was long the leader of the "Moderate" party in the General Assembly, became the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and is still known as the author of a *History of Scotland*, a *History of the Reign of Charles V.*, a *History of America*,

and other similar works. William Robertson himself published a sermon, entitled "Ministers ought to please God rather than Men." In 1742 he was appointed by the General Assembly a member of the Paraphrase Committee, who accepted three pieces of his composition. These were Paraphrase xxv., "How few receive with cordial faith"; Paraphrase xlii., "Let not your hearts with anxious thoughts"; and Paraphrase xliii., "You now must hear my voice no more." In the revision these beautiful paraphrases were more or less altered, but their original character and spirit have been well maintained.

Nahum Tate is the only Irishman who contributed anything to our Scottish paraphrases. He was born in Dublin in 1652. He was the son of the Rev. Faithful Tate, D.D., and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He early went to reside in London, where he adopted literature as his profession. He succeeded Shadwell as Poet Laureate in 1690. He published a number of poems and dramatic pieces, but his chief work was that which he executed in conjunction with Dr. Nicholas Brady, Chaplain to King William III. This was a *New Version of the Psalms*, and was published in 1696. In a *Supplement* to it there appeared, in 1703, a number of hymns written wholly, it is believed, by Tate. Among these was what is now our Paraphrase xxxvii., "While humble shepherds watch'd their flocks." There is almost no change on it except in the first verse, which, as Tate wrote it, reads :—

> While shepherds watch'd their Flocks by Night
> all seated on the ground,
> The angel of the Lord came down,
> and Glory shone around.

Poor Tate! His life was not worthy of his work and

genius. He was described as "a free, good-natured, fuddling companion." He fell into debt and intemperate habits, and, on August 12, 1715, he ended his days within the precincts of the Mint at Southwark, then a sanctuary for debtors.

Isaac Watts, like Addison and Doddridge, was an Englishman. But, although of English birth, there is more of him than of any other writer in our Scottish paraphrases. Fully a third of them came originally from his gifted pen. He was the son of a schoolmaster in Southampton, where he was born, on July 17, 1674, the eldest of a family of nine children. He was a precocious child, and at the age of four he began to study Latin. When he was sixteen he was sent to an Academy in London presided over by an Independent minister named Thomas Rowe. There he devoted himself so closely to his studies that he permanently injured his health. In 1694 he returned in enfeebled health to his father's home, where for two years he devoted himself to quiet study. During that period of meditative retirement his young poetic soul effloresced into many of his memorable hymns. On one occasion, when complaining of the cold baldness of the psalms sung in their Nonconformist Chapel, he was asked to *give them something better*, and shortly afterwards he produced a hymn entitled "A New Song to the Lamb that was slain," which is now to be found as our Paraphrase lxv., "Behold the glories of the Lamb."

In 1696 he became tutor to the family of Sir John Hartopp at Stoke-Newington, where he remained until January 1702. During the last four of those years he also served as assistant to Dr. Isaac Chauncey, minister of the Independent Chapel, Mark Lane, London. After that time he became the pastor, in full charge of the congregation. In the following year, 1703, he

published his *Horae Lyricae*, and, on his health again breaking down, an assistant was appointed to him in the ministry. In 1709 appeared his well-known *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, in three books, which, says Maclagan, "may be said to have revolutionised the method of praise in the British Churches." In 1792 he was prostrated with a very severe illness, from which he never thoroughly recovered. Thereafter he preached only occasionally to his congregation, whose complete oversight had to be entrusted to his assistant, Mr. Price. Sir John Abney, a Nonconformist, who had been Lord Mayor of London in 1700, invited him to try the effect of a change of air at his house at Theobalds. "Thither," says Southey, "Watts went, intending to stay there for a single week, and there he remained for six-and-thirty years, which was as long as he lived." There he lived, free from every care, and surrounded by everything that love and wealth could procure to make him happy, and there he wrote his *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* (1715), his *Psalms of David Imitated* (1719), and several other works. In 1720 his complete works were published in six quarto volumes. In 1728 he received the degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh and also from the University of Aberdeen. He died at the age of seventy-four, on November 25, 1748.

Watts has secured for himself an imperishable remembrance by such hymns as these: "There is a land of pure delight"; "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun"; "When I survey the wondrous cross"; and "Our God, our help in ages past." He must also for ever live in the loving memory of those who prize our Scottish paraphrases. Twenty-one of them, and one of the five hymns, came directly from his pen. And for four other paraphrases we are in some measure indebted to him. We enumerate them as follows:—

(1) *Watts' Twenty-One Paraphrases:*

Par. i. "Let heaven arise, let earth appear."
Par. iii. "Naked as from the earth we came."
Par. v. "Though trouble springs not from the dust."
Par. vii. "How should the sons of Adam's race."
Par. xiii. "Keep silence, all ye sons of men."
Par. xv. "As long as life its term extends."
Par. xx. "How glorious Sion's courts appear."
Par. xxii. "Why pour'st thou forth thine anxious plaint."
Par. xxiv. "Ye heav'ns, send forth your song of praise."
Par. xl. "The wretched prodigal behold."
Par. xli. "As when the Hebrew prophet rais'd."
Par. xlvi. "Vain are the hopes the sons of men."
Par. xlvii. "And shall we then go on to sin."
Par. liv. "I'm not asham'd to own my lord."
Par. lv. "My race is run; my warfare's o'er."
Par. lvi. "How wretched was our former state."
Par. lvii. "Jesus, the Son of God, who once."
Par. lxi. "Bless'd be the everlasting God."
Par. lxv. "Behold the glories of the Lamb."
Par. lxvi. "How bright these glorious spirits shine!"
Par. lxvii. "Lo! what a glorious sight appears."

And to these we add—

Hymn iv. "Blest morning! whose first dawning rays."

No doubt in the case of all of them considerable alterations were made.

(2) *Watts' Four Paraphrases*, for which we are in some measure indebted to him, as having given at least the suggestion or first framework of them, are:—

Par. l. "When the last trumpet's awful voice."
Par. li. "Soon shall this earthly frame, dissolv'd."
Par. lxiii. "Behold th' amazing gift of love."
Par. lxiv. "To him that lov'd the souls of men."

With such a record Isaac Watts may well be called the prince of hymn-writers. How he attained this high eminence may be learned by perceiving the fine spirit

which was in the man—a spirit, allied to poetic genius, which was able to interpret the average Christian feeling of every age and country. It has been said of him: "Though hardly over five feet high, and feeble physically, he was counted among the best preachers of his time, and his sermons by no means belie this reputation. His theology was marked by a large charity and a catholic spirit then uncommon among Dissenters."

To the foregoing poets of the paraphrases ought one other to be added? Had Scotland's chiefest bard, **Robert Burns**, any hand in the work? "Yes," was the answer given in 1847. In an article in the *Free Church Magazine* of that year it was stated, by one who said that he had come into possession of an important MS. volume of the paraphrases, that "not a few of the alterations adopted in the new paraphrases are from the pen of Robert Burns, and are written in our volume by his own hand." The statement came as a surprise, and caused much controversy. But the controversy was soon settled. The manuscript volume was submitted to the close scrutiny of antiquarians and Church leaders, among whom were Principal Lee, David Laing, Hugh Miller, and Robert Chambers; and their verdict on the writing in dispute was that the handwriting was not that of Burns, but of Logan. "Thus arose," says Maclagan, "and thus ended the supposition . . . that to the author of 'Tam o' Shanter' and the 'Cotter's Saturday Night' we are indebted for some of the paraphrases."

It was the men of whom we have given brief biographical notes who were the chief, if not the only, makers of the paraphrases. And, as we have seen, they were men of theological learning, poetic culture, and true religious feeling. Their work has stood the test of time. There were those among their contemporaries who treated it with disrespect by neglecting in their Church Courts to

give an opinion upon it, although repeatedly asked by the General Assembly. There were others, both early and late, who gave it their unfavourable criticism. Thus the Presbytery of Alford, in 1747, objected concerning the 1745 edition that it was *too evangelical*; for, said they, "the doctrines of the faith have a much larger share in it than the practical duties." Almost one hundred years afterwards — *i.e.* in May 1846, in the General Assembly of the Free Church—there were those who objected concerning the 1781 edition that it was *not sufficiently evangelical*; that it was too "*moderate*" in its tone and teaching. But, notwithstanding the winds of hostile criticism which at various times have blown from opposite quarters, the paraphrases remain, and will remain, firmly rooted in the affections and veneration of the Scottish people. Their fine literary qualities commend them to the cultured, and the average tone of religious sentiment which they express commends them generally as a fitting form of praise for uniting all classes in the worship of God. And some of them have won for themselves an imperishable place in the hymnology of the world.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARAPHRASES IN EVOLUTION

All the paraphrases, except ten or eleven, passed through what we might call a process of evolution before they attained their final form as we now have them. The exceptions were: four by Morison, viz. xix. xxi. xxix. and xxx.; two by Cameron, viz. xiv. and xvii.; one by Martin, viz. xii.; one by Blacklock, viz. xvi.; one by Logan, viz. xxxi.; one by Robert Blair, viz. xxxii.; and one by Hugh Blair, viz. xliv. In the case of the others, this is what happened. A sacred lyric, considered to be a worthy translation of some passage of Scripture, was submitted to the Paraphrase Committee. If accepted for inclusion in the collection, it was subjected to critical scrutiny, and perhaps to consequent alterations. Sometimes these alterations were made by the original author, but oftener by some other reviser or revisers. In respect to many of the paraphrases, this process went on at intervals during the long period of nearly forty years. The gradual transformation may therefore be traced by following the original text of the paraphrase to the edition of 1745, then to the edition of 1751, and finally to the edition of 1781. Such a study is very interesting. Maclagan has followed it out in full. But space forbids us to do more than give a few illustrative specimens.

Paraphrase ii.—Genesis xxviii. 20-22. In his volume of 1739 Doddridge published this hymn :—

1. O God of Bethel, by whose Hand
Thine Israel still is fed,
Who thro' this weary Pilgrimage
Hast all our Fathers led :
2. To Thee our humble Vows we raise,
To Thee address our Pray'r,
And in thy kind and faithful Breast
Deposite all our Care.

3. If Thou thro' each perplexing Path,
Wilt be our constant Guide :
If Thou wilt daily Bread supply,
And Raiment wilt provide :
4. If Thou wilt spread thy Shield around,
Till these our Wand'rings cease,
And at our Father's lov'd Abode
Our Souls arrive in Peace :

5. To Thee, as to our Cov'nant God,
We'll our whole selves resign :
And count, that not our *Tenth* alone,
But all we have is Thine.

In the editions of the paraphrases of both 1745 and 1751 it appeared in the same form, except that in verse 4 the word "Wings" was substituted for "Shield." But it is to Logan that we owe the paraphrase as it now stands. He took out of the earlier versions the "bargaining" element implied in the "if," and otherwise made material changes. This is how it appeared in his own volume of poems :—

1. O God of *Abraham*, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed,
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led !
2. Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before thy throne of grace,
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race !

3. Thro' each perplexing path of life
Our wandering footsteps guide,
Give us *by* day our daily bread,
And raiment fit provide !
4. O spread thy covering wings around
Till all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father's loved abode
Our *feet* arrive in peace !

5. Now with the humble voice of prayer
Thy mercy we implore :
Then with the grateful voice of praise
Thy goodness we'll adore !

It is to be observed that, except three words marked in *italics*, and the whole of the last verse, it is in this form that we now have the paraphrase. The changes were probably made by Logan himself.

Paraphrase xxxv.—St. Matthew xxvi. 26-29. Some see in this paraphrase, written by Morison, a resemblance, but surely at most a very remote resemblance, to this hymn by Watts :—

1. 'Twas on that dark, that doleful night,
When pow'rs of earth and hell arose
Against the Son of God's delight,
And friends betray'd him to his foes :
2. Before the mournful scene began,
He took the bread, and bless'd and brake :
What love thro' all his actions ran !
What wond'rous words of grace he spake !

3. "This is my body broke for sin,
Receive and eat the living food" :
Then took the cup, and bless'd the wine :
"'Tis the new cov'nant in my blood."
4. For us his flesh with nails was torn,
He bore the scourge, he felt the thorn :
And justice pour'd upon his head
Its heavy vengeance, in our stead.

5. For us his vital blood was spilt,
   To buy the pardon of our guilt,
   When for black crimes of biggest size,
   He gave his soul a sacrifice.
6. "Do this" (he cry'd), "till time shall end
   In mem'ry of your dying friend:
   Meet at my table and record
   The love of your departed Lord."

7. Jesus the feast we celebrate,
   We show thy death, we sing thy name,
   Till thou return, and we shall eat
   The marriage supper of the Lamb.

How different this is from Morison's paraphrase! In an earlier form of it he made the first verse run thus:—

'Twas on that night when doom'd to know
The eager rage of every foe,
The Lord of Life embraced a fiend
In semblance of a courteous friend.

Paraphrase liv.—2 Tim. i. 12. This paraphrase was originally written by Watts in this form:—

1. I'm not asham'd to own my Lord,
   Or to defend his cause,
   Maintain the honour of his word,
   The glory of his cross.
2. Jesus, my God! I know his name,
   His name is all my trust:
   Nor will he put my soul to shame,
   Nor let my hope be lost.

3. Firm as his throne his promise stands,
   And he can well secure
   What I've committed to his hands
   Till the decisive hour.
4. Then will he own my worthless name
   Before his Father's Face,
   And in the new Jerusalem
   Appoint my soul a place.

The only alterations on it, in the 1745 and 1751 editions, were in verse 1, lines 3 and 4, as follows :—

Maintain the glory of his cross
And honour all his laws.

These lines remain in our present version ; and there also, in verse 2, "Jesus, my God," is changed to "Jesus, my Lord," and "trust" is changed to "boast." In verse 4 "my worthless" is changed to "his servant's." And in verse 3, the first two lines are changed to—

I know that safe with him remains,
Protected by his pow'r.

These last changes are attributed to Cameron.

Paraphrase lx.—Heb. xiii. 20, 21. This paraphrase appeared in the 1745 edition as Doddridge wrote it, thus :—

1. Father of Peace, and God of Love,
We own thy Pow'r to save,
That Pow'r by which our Shepherd rose
Victorious o'er the Grave.
2. We triumph in that Shepherd's Name,
Still watchful for our Good :
Who brought th' eternal Cov'nant down
And seal'd it with his Blood.
3. So may thy Spirit seal my Soul
And mould it to thy will :
That my fond heart no more may stray,
But keep thy Cov'nant still.
4. Still may we gain superior Strength,
And press with Vigour on,
Till full Perfection crown our Hopes,
And fix us near thy Throne.

In the 1751 edition it was altered into this form :—

1. Father of peace, and God of love !
We own thy pow'r to save,
By which our mighty Shepherd rose
Victorious o'er the grave.

2. Him from the dead thou brought'st again,
When, by his sacred blood,
Confirm'd and seal'd for evermore,
Th' eternal cov'nant stood.

3. O may thy Spirit seal our souls,
And mould them to thy will,
That our weak hearts no more may stray,
But keep thy precepts still;
4. Work in us all thy holy will
To man by Jesus shown:
Till we, through him, improving still,
At last approach thy throne.

In the 1781 edition only a slight change was made in verse 1; but verse 4 had to give way to this one, written, it is believed, by Cameron:—

That to perfection's sacred height
We nearer still may rise,
And all we think, and all we do,
Be pleasing in thine eyes.

Paraphrase lxvi. — Rev. vii. 13-17. The germ of this paraphrase is to be found in Watts' hymn:—

1. "These glorious minds, how bright they shine!
Whence all their white array?
How came they to the happy seats
Of everlasting day?"
2. From tort'ring pains to endless joys,
On fiery wheels they rode,
And strangely wash'd their raiment wh te
In Jesus' dying blood.

3. Now they approach a spotless God,
And bow before his throne;
Their warbling harps, and sacred songs,
Adore the holy One.
4. The unveil'd glories of his face
Amongst his saints reside,
While the rich treasure of his grace
Sees all their wants supply'd.

5. Tormenting thirst shall leave their souls,
And hunger flee as fast:
The fruit of life's immortal tree
Shall be their sweet repast.
6. The Lamb shall lead his heavenly flock
Where living fountains rise,
And love divine shall wipe away
The sorrows of their eyes.

With the exception of an unimportant change in verse 2, it appeared the same in editions 1745 and 1751, as follows:—

1. These glorious minds how bright they shine,
Whence all their white array?
How came they to the happy seats
Of everlasting day?
2. Lo! these are they, to endless joy,
From suffrings great who came,
And wash'd their raiment white in blood,
The blood of Christ the Lamb.

3. Now they approach a Holy God,
And bow before his Throne,
With hearts enlarged to serve him still,
And make his glory known.
4. His presence fills each heart with joy,
Tunes ev'ry mouth to sing:
By day, by night, the bless'd abodes
With glad hosannas ring.

5. Hunger and thirst are felt no more,
Nor suns with scorching ray;
God is their sun, whose cheering beams
Diffuse eternal day.
6. The Lamb shall lead his heavenly flock
Where living waters rise;
And love divine shall wipe away
The sorrows of their eyes.

But the whole paraphrase was recast, probably by Cameron, for the edition of 1781, and was thus put into the beautiful form in which we now sing it.

Paraphrase lxvii.—Rev. xxi. 1-9. The evolution of this paraphrase is unique in this respect, that it is an ingenious combination of two hymns by Watts: "Lo! what a glorious sight appears," and "See where the great incarnate God." In this combined form it appeared in the edition of both 1745 and 1751, but it was considerably altered in the edition of 1781 by Cameron. In the latter form it is now to be found in our present collection. It is the last of the paraphrases, and it ends with the solemn prayer, so beautifully expressed in the last verse:

> O may we stand before the Lamb,
> When earth and seas are fled,
> And hear the Judge pronounce our name,
> With blessings on our head!

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